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COUNTRY AND TOWN

A summary of the SCOTT & UTHWATT Reports

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A Summary of the

SCOTT AND UTHWATT REPORTS

(S139)

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THE EDITOR

G. M. YOUNG was born in 1882. Educated at St. Paul's and Balliol: and a Fellow of All Souls. Entered the Civil Service but spent his middle years abroad in Russia, Central Europe and Italy. His first book, *Gibbon*, appeared in 1932, followed by *Charles I and Cromwell* in 1935 : *Victorian England*; *Portrait of an Age*, 1937 : *Daylight and Champaign*, 1938, and *The Government of Britain*, 1941.

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A Summary of the Scott and Uthwatt Reports

Prepared under the supervision
of, and with an Introduction by

G. M. YOUNG

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EDITOR'S NOTE

WHEN the Scott and Uthwatt reports were published, many people—townsmen and countrymen alike—who had read the brief summaries published in the newspapers, asked to have the reports themselves in a convenient form, so that they might be read and digested together. The summary here provided will, it is hoped, be found to include everything that is of general interest, omitting those parts which are of technical importance only.

The summary has been prepared under the supervision of Mr. G. M. Young, the historian of Victorian England. He has also written the Introduction, which may be regarded as the key to the whole body of proposals made by the two Committees.

EDITORS NOTE

INTRODUCTION

I HAVE always thought that the best way to understand the land and its problems is to go back to the beginning. Imagine that you are one of a shipload of Saxon pirates, nosing about the Channel for a place to land and settle in. You come ashore, scatter the natives (keeping some of them perhaps to work for you), and then you dig yourself in, or rather, you must plough yourself in. So perhaps the next ship brings, along with your wife and children, your plough and other gear that settlers need, and the oxen bellowing and sea-sick in the hold. The English village is the Ploughman's Camp, which took root and grew.

These Camps or Villages will be a certain distance apart, and they will all need certain things. Water, first of all, both for man and beast. So, as a rule, they will be planted beside streams, or at spring-heads where the water comes out at the foot of the hills. They will need meadows to grow hay for the beasts. A little higher up, on the drier soil, the crops are grown. Then, there must be grazing ground for the sheep and cattle. And, finally, we shall need a bit of woodland, for fencing, for fuel, for the handles of scythes and hammers, and for the pigs to rout about in, and feed themselves on acorns or beech-mast. With very few exceptions, every English village can be reduced to this pattern—meadow, plough, and pasture, with a little timber close at hand.

So there they are, and there is the countryside—a network of tracks with little beads, the villages, where the tracks come together. But no village can be entirely self-supporting—it must for instance have iron for its tools, and however careful Wulf the Smith may be, sooner or later iron wears out. It may be poor ground for sheep—so the wool must be fetched from far. But not too far—we cannot afford more than a day off now and then to go to market and exchange our surplus cheese for a length of cloth dyed blue with woad; or a well-tanned cow's hide for a new axe or sword. The market must be within reach; and so, besides the little beads which are the Villages, the landscape shows larger beads, where the main tracks come together, and these large beads are the Towns. Finally, since England is an Island, there are the Seaports as well, where foreign traders come with rarities which we cannot provide at home (bearskins, for

example, for winter use), and take back our native wares—those embroidered clothes, for instance, for which English women were famous all over Europe.

That is the pattern, and it remained the pattern for over a thousand years. That is to say—so long as the chief business of the country was to keep itself fed, and so long as the speed of movement was limited by the pace of a horse drawing a cart. Then came the great change, which started about two hundred years ago, and was rounded off by the invention of railways a hundred years ago. On top of the old pattern—little beads and large beads—industry and commerce laid what perhaps we may call the great Blobs—the enormous Blob of London, the greatest port in the world, and the manufacturing Blobs, the Black Country, the Woollen Country in the West Riding, the Cotton Country of Lancashire, the Shipbuilding and Engineering Country of Clydeside. And the Blobs grew, as I have said elsewhere, "undrained, unpoliced, ungoverned and unschooled."

In a word—uncontrolled. And here was the great difference between the old pattern and the new. The old pattern was natural, because it rested on the natural foundation of seed time and harvest. The village was limited by the acres it could plough or the cows it could graze. However hungry and thirsty you may be, you cannot *make* the fields grow two harvests in a year, or a cow have a calf every six months. In the same way, the old market town was limited by the amount of business the villages could do. There was no point in having two mills if there was only corn for one—or three coaching inns if there was only business for two. But the new manufacturing towns were limited only by the demand for their goods, and that demand was largely a foreign demand. If your factory could not keep pace with the American demand for machinery, or the Russian demand for cloth, you built another factory. And another. And another row of houses for your workpeople. And another. And always at the expense of the country—always converting good pasture into Building Estates, and good cornland into Factory Sites.

Anyone who wants to see what the Blobs were like in their early days, should read the description of Wodgate in Disraeli's *Sybil*. There you have the picture (and every word is based on evidence) of an industrial territory growing—and prospering—in a state of complete anarchy, like a

miner's camp in California or Australia. Could it have been prevented? Could this growth have been controlled, or organized, or planned? No, I don't think it could.

We are all apt, I think, when we look back on the past, to suppose that our ancestors must have been very stupid, not to see the things which are so plain to us; or particularly selfish, not to go and do them. They were neither. We forget that ideas have to be discovered just as much as things. Why wasn't Queen Elizabeth vaccinated? That is an easy one! Vaccination had not been invented. And, in the days when the Blobs were spreading, the idea of Municipal control or State control had not been discovered.

Supposing some one could take us back to Wodgate, as Disraeli saw it, what should we think? I believe we should say, "This is awful: we cannot allow people to go on living like this. But how we are to stop it I can't imagine. And I'm not sure that we ought to stop it. After all, the plain fact is that in this Island we can no longer feed ourselves. We must buy abroad. And we can buy only if we sell. But if the Government starts interfering, controlling, regulating and planning, I don't feel at all sure that our industries will be able to sell. They may find themselves undercut in those very markets where we buy our food. And then—where is the food to come from?"

As a matter of fact, we did get the better of Wodgate and its horrors. And how? Not by any single comprehensive plan, but by a score of devices all tending in the same direction—baths, hospitals, factory inspectors, trade unions, schools, model dwellings, parks, Saturday half-holidays, excursions, school meals, insurance. The list of devices is endless: in the Statute Book they make up a great part of the legislation of a hundred years. But now we have come round again to the question which for the greater part of those hundred years we had forgotten. The last war made us open our eyes. But we soon closed them again. I don't think we shall shut them this time. Because in this war millions of people have learnt what that question is, and what it really means. We are living on Relief, furnished by America under the Lend Lease arrangement. What are we to live on when those arrangements are wound up? On our shipping? Much of it has been sunk. On our foreign investments? mostly gone to buy munitions. On our export trade? On our services as bankers and insurers? All rather doubtful quantities. But

at least the land is there. What the land can do we have learnt in these last four years. And this time we must not forget it.

* * * * *

The primary use of the land is to grow food for the people of the land.

The secondary use is to provide industrial sites where they can manufacture things to buy food with.

The tertiary use is to provide building sites where they can live while they are working, whether on the land or in industry.

But the three uses run in and out of one another because each is indispensable to the others. Food, housing and employment cannot be taken to pieces. They are all vital necessities. So the question is not "Shall we have farms, shall we have factories, shall we have houses?" We all know the answer to that! The question is "Where shall we have them? How can we make sure that every acre is scheduled for its proper use?"

Under our pre-industrial economy it did pretty well find its proper use because the proper use was as a rule the most profitable use. "Grow food on your best land: build on your worst." But the natural distribution was upset as soon as it became more profitable to rear houses than cows, or to grow bungalows rather than corn, however good for corn and cows the land might be. There are countries where of recent years thousands of square miles of land have been blown away in gigantic dust storms leaving a desert behind them. With our soil and climate we are in no danger of erosion on that scale. Our mischief is the diversion of food-bearing land to alien uses, a process which is legally known as "development." I prefer my own word "diversion." And in the years between the wars, this diversion was going on at the rate of 45,000 acres a year.

When I first wrote on this subject, I think it was in 1937, I felt very much like my imaginary visitor to Wodgate. I said, "This has got to be stopped, but how in the world to stop it, I don't know." Here is a man who ought to be growing Beet. He would prefer to grow Beet. But, for the sake of his wife and children, he is sorely tempted to grow a Bungalow instead. Then, clearly, if you forbid him to grow a Bungalow, you ought to compensate him for the loss he has sustained. What loss? He has lost the Right of

Diversion. But how to compensate him was a question to which I could not think of a satisfactory answer. Suppose I prove that beet brings me in £100 a year, and I could make £200 by letting bungalows. The Minister of Agriculture says grow Beet. Very well. Then can I ask the Treasury to pay me the odd £100 a year as compensation? But somebody runs up a factory just in front of my beautiful bungalows, so that nobody wants to live in them. Does my compensation stop? No, I said: that clearly won't do, because all the valuers in the country all working overtime would never keep pace with the constant changes in the valuation and therefore in the compensation.

Let me put it another way. Barchester is a pretty country town, with a good bus service to the seaport of Shipton. More and more the people of Shipton are using Barchester as their dormitory. Barchester will grow. Already it wants land for five hundred new houses. Round Barchester is a green belt of farms, belonging to four owners. But no one yet knows where those five hundred houses will be put. So you cannot have Mr. East, Mr. South, Mr. West and Mr. North all shouting for compensation together, because they will certainly not all earn it. Are you to wait till it is settled which way Barchester is to expand and then give the lucky Mr. East his bonanza in a Housing Estate, and compensate the other three?

The proposal of the Uthwatt committee is to do neither of these things. They propose that the State should buy, at an independent valuation, *all* the diversionary rights over the whole green belt of Barchester. The four Squires will be left with the ownership. They can farm to their heart's content. But if Barchester wants Mr. South's land for housing, the Town Council must buy it at a fair price. If Mr. South chooses to build the houses himself, he will have the preference over any third party. But all speculation in land is extinguished, because the Diversionary Rights having gone, there is nothing left to speculate in.

Which, let it be granted, may be very hard on Mr. East who wants money to pay his death duties with, and hoped to sell a good slice of his land for building purposes. And when these proposals come before Parliament to be turned into law, Mr. East and his like will no doubt be heard—and will be entitled to be heard.

But the green belt of Barchester stretches over hill and

dale till it runs into the green belt of Marlingford. Where are you to stop? What is your Diversionary Pool? Here comes the boldest proposal of the Uthwatt Committee. They don't stop. Their pool is the whole country. They propose that the State should acquire, should buy from the present owners, the Diversionary Rights over *all* the land in the country, not scheduled as Town Lands.

(I confess to feeling a difficulty here. I am not sure whether by Town Lands the Committee do or do not mean Village Lands. It is difficult to draw the line and say at what point a large village becomes a small town. But from the point of view of rural housing, it is very important to know whether vacant plots in or about a village are to rank as Town Lands or Agricultural Lands).

* * * * *

I have long been convinced that the private ownership of food-producing land is vital to full production. The case for Nationalization was never better stated than it was by Sir Daniel Hall in his book *Reconstruction and the Land*, and just before his death Sir Daniel wrote thanking me for the fair way in which I had put his argument. But this argument did not lead me to change my mind, and indeed I think we may now say that State ownership as our fathers and grandfathers thought of it—in the days of vast estates and owners, as Gladstone once said, "With £20,000, £50,000 and £100,000 by the year" (and Income Tax at 5d. in the £!)—has ceased to be a practical issue. What we want to know is: Who will do it *best*? I have not the least doubt of the answer—the owner, large or small, who intends to do his duty by the estate and the people on the estate.

Take these two things separately and see what they mean. Hitherto farming, or food-growing, has been a precarious business for two reasons. One was uncertainty of price. The other was the encroachment of the towns, sometimes by sprawl, sometimes by jump. In some places, they just ate their way into the country, a street at a time. In others, they jumped straight out to the surrounding villages, which in their turn swallowed up the surrounding fields. But in either case, uncontrolled building offers a temptation to the landowner and the farmer on the outskirts of a town. Remove this temptation, and you have increased the incentive to good farming. Therefore, this plan of acquiring the Diversionary Rights and so putting an end to land speculation

round our towns seems to me likely to give an impetus to good ownership.

But "the labourer is worthy of his hire," and whether he be a large landowner or a small holder, the man who does his best by his land, who follows the rule of "good ownership" deserves his reward. And what is that to be? A sound price for his produce: and the better the price, the smaller will be the gap between Building Value and Farming Value: between Beet and Bungalow.

Here then are the makings of a good bargain between Town and Country. Remember the figures. Four-fifths of our land is rural, one fifth urban. But four-fifths of our people are urban, and one-fifth rural. These are the Bargaining Parties—and the Town counts as four to one. What then can they offer one another? I think the transaction can be put somehow thus. The Country says: "We can sell you food of very fine quality—especially milk, meat, fruit, vegetables, eggs. Will you pay us a price sufficient to keep the land in good heart?" The Town replies: "Yes, we will. But then you must not demand excessive compensation for the loss of your Building Values." And if the Country is wise, I think it will close.

Then the Country goes back to its farm, and the State is left with these Diversionary Rights for building purposes all over the land. What does it do with them? Now here I find myself differing from the Committee. I think these rights ought to be vested not in "the State" generally, but specifically in the Minister of Agriculture. (Remember we are not speaking of Town Lands). They should be regarded as *his* rights, and if anyone else wanted to use them they should come to him for permission. Because, whether it is a new housing estate, or a new factory, or a new airport, that is to be built in the country, the question is "How much milk and meat can we spare for these purposes, and where can the land best be found?" And so long as the Minister of Agriculture controls the use of agricultural land, he ought, I think, to control the disposal of it for other purposes.

What are these other purposes? Industrial undertakings, housing, roads, airports (I say nothing of Defence Works, like camps and aerodromes, where national security is the over-ruling consideration). A good many Government Departments would want to have their finger in that pie, and I agree with the Uthwatt Committee that we should

need to have a Suzerain Minister presiding over a Departmental group—Trade, Health, Transport, Works and Buildings—by whom in the last resort the use of the Diversionary Rights should be decided.

In all this, I am assuming that the primary use of the land is the natural use, namely, the production of food. Now, in Professor Denison's note to the Scott Report there is a sentence which I should like to see printed as a motto to every forecast and every project that issues from the Press.

"We do not know the shape of the post-war economic world."

We do not *know* how much of our land we shall need to feed us—or how much we can part with for other purposes—or what those purposes will turn out to be. The one thing we *do* know is that we cannot possibly run the risk of letting the land—food-producing land—lose its virtue. But if the land is to be kept in good heart, two things are absolutely vital. One, which I have already spoken of, is Good Prices. The other is Good Housing. If the people are not there the land cannot live. And they will not be there unless they are housed in comfort and self-respect. I once wrote: "the foundation of agricultural policy is the house that caught the eye of Mary when she was making up her mind whether to marry William, who drives the tractor that ploughs the field that grows the corn that feeds the hen that lays the egg that the Town eats." And with the house, in these days, goes the grid, the piped water supply and a good bus service to the nearest market.

* * * * *

So much for the Country. But what of the Towns, and particularly the Blobs—the great "conurbations" as they are sometimes called? The Uthwatt Report bears the somewhat alarming title Report of the Expert Committee on Compensation and Betterment. But the idea is simple enough.

I start an evil-smelling trade in my house. The Town Council tells me to stop. I have no right to compensation because I never had a right to make myself a nuisance to my neighbours.

I let a house with inadequate window lighting. The Council makes me put in proper windows and I have to do it at my own expense, because bad lighting is unhealthy.

The Council pulls my house down to widen a street. They pay me for the loss of my property. That is Compensation.

I have a shop. The Council builds a block of flats. My customers increase—my business prospers—my good-will goes up in the market. The Council can fairly ask me to pay something out of my increased takings, which result from their enterprise and not my own. That is Betterment.

Now it seems to me that the first step in Town Planning is to settle the principles of Betterment and Compensation. It is a most intricate subject, not to be mastered at one reading, though the Committee have been at great pains to make it clear. But when once the principles, and the method of calculation, are settled, then the finance of Town Planning can be straightened out. The Town will know, so to speak, how much it will cost to "own itself," how much it will have to pay in Compensation and how much will come back in Betterment. Then it can cut its coat according to its cloth.

The best way to picture this business of Town Planning is to imagine the whole town coming into the hands of one public-spirited owner, and consider what he would do. He would begin, I think, by saying "What is this Town *for*?" and making his plans accordingly. Some people would have to be bought out—but they ought not to demand a higher price because he wanted their land than they would get if they sold it in the market. (The Committee lay stress on this principle which is not quite in accordance with the existing law). Some people would have their rent raised because more business was coming their way as the result of his improvements. Thus we have Compensation and Betterment already at work in the case of a private owner, and the principle would be the same if he handed over his whole property to the Town itself.

The Town now "owns itself," and proceeds, we will suppose, to develop the original owner's ideas. There is of course this difference: the owner had only himself to please: the Town has to please the ratepayers. Suppose they decide to drop all planning and jog on anyhow. Can Parliament, can the Government, interfere and say they *must* plan? The Uthwatt Committee would say yes: they must produce their scheme. But our existing towns do not own themselves. What are they to do? Answer: Parliament must put them in a position to own themselves, by giving them power to purchase all the land they need: if necessary, the whole land within the town boundaries. Then, if Barchester chooses

to use the power, the whole of Barchester will belong to the Mayor and Burgesses of Barchester. They will be in the position of the private owner laying out his private estate. What they do next is their concern. They can, if they like, make Barchester the most convenient and beautiful town in England. If they like—if the ratepayers, that is to say, will foot the bill: if the Town Council will take the best professional advice.

Certainly it is a brilliant prospect to think of the towns of England vying with one another in dainty and comfortable houses, splendid piazzas, town halls surpassing Flanders and river embankments like those of some old French city. But it is just as well not to let one's imagination get out of hand, and there are difficulties. For one thing, there are all the devastated towns to be rehoused first—and there may be a great shortage of labour and material. Railways, too, are stubborn things, and a railway station which was in the right place in 1843 may be very much in the way in 1943. The population, moreover, cannot be put to sleep for six months while their old slums are being cleared away and the new housing estate provided. The great examples of planning, Winchelsea and Salisbury in the Middle Ages, Bath and the New Town of Edinburgh, were carried out on clear sites—and on a small scale. But to get Wodgate back to what Wodgate might have been if its growth had been controlled from the beginning—well, that is hardly going to be the work of one generation.

Still we must begin somewhere, and the sooner the better. And I think, on reading them through again, that the two grand principles underlying these Reports give us a better chance of getting somewhere than we have ever had before—provided we take it. They are, once more: first, that there should never again be any uncontrolled encroachment on food-bearing land; second, that the town should be given power to own the town. Then let each party set to work, on its own lines, but to the same end—to develop the estate, country or town, in the best possible way, so that both can say: "This is a good place to work in, and a good place to live in. So, let us see if we cannot make it even better." I have always liked the old Italian saying "Set your ladders on the ground." Because if they aren't on the ground, you may aspire, but you won't get there.

October, 1943. G. M. YOUNG.

PART ONE

THE SCOTT REPORT

THE PROBLEM

THE problem is one of the future. It is the consideration of what would happen after the war, if the Government were to take no further action to regulate constructional development in country areas. Before the war, the most noticeable trend was the way in which industry tended to become diffused. The decline in some of the older heavier industries, particularly those working for the export market, went hand in hand with the increase in the light industries making semi-luxury goods, relying much upon electric power and road transport. This resulted in the growth of industrial patches round existing towns in the Midlands, the South and the South-East. The development of the new light industries on the fringes of such cities as Birmingham and London made necessary the building of new houses for the workers, provision of services to supply their needs and those of the industries, and of facilities for their entertainment. This, in turn, resulted in the mushroom growth of suburbs, cities that sprawled into the countryside and ever-growing concentric rings of housing and industry.

Meanwhile, the older industrial centres in the north and in South Wales were rapidly decaying. Few new industries were springing up to fill the gaps caused by the decline of the older industries, and derelict sites became more and more numerous.

It is therefore reasonable to suppose that if the same factors should recur in the post-war position, these pre-war trends will again become evident. Indeed, there seems no reason why there should be any change in the old tendency of light industry to gravitate towards the larger consumption centres, particularly where the centres are also ports. Unless, therefore, such a movement is deliberately checked, the Committee considers that the expansion of big centres of population in the South Midlands, the South and South-East of London, will continue and that London and Birmingham, in particular, will spread very much farther afield, though the redevelopment of war-damaged centres of towns may check growth along the fringes.

At the same time, a proportion of the firms which have dispersed their production during the war may wish to continue where they are after the war. Further, many large war-time factories have been established in country areas. Some, at least, may wish to continue after the war, either for the work they are now doing or for some other, peace-time, purpose. Some are permanent and not temporary structures, and were built for continuance after the war: here, too, houses and services will have to be provided for the workers, where this had not already been done. If some of these factories are used as centres of new industry or trading, this may draw away some industry from the present congested population centres.

It is, however, clear that if pre-war trends were to continue unchecked, the effect would be disastrous. Apart from the social consequences of herding huge masses of population in a few centres, the continued spread of such centres would have a tragic effect upon the countryside. It would lead not only to an increase in housing and factories on the outskirts, but to sporadic building development in the open countryside and in villages within a reasonable journey of the town or city. The probability that there will be more car owners after the war will tend to increase the dangers of haphazard building in an ever-growing circle round towns.

Before the war, more and more people were spending week-ends and holidays in the countryside and on the coast, and the more accessible country was being used as a dormitory. There seems no reason why this movement should not continue, particularly if holidays with pay are extended to further sections of the community. More week-enders mean more accommodation in existing resorts, the creation of new ones, the building of holiday camps, the provision of more youth hostels—all involving a considerable building programme. This building, which must be provided for, would, if unregulated, ruin many more districts of the beautiful land of Britain, particularly along the coast. It would also be very damaging to agriculture.

It is probable that the condition of the countryside after the war will be very different from that of the preceding twenty-five years. It may be in a stronger position than before to resist the invasion of the town, but the country can never be strong enough to hold out against the town, even when it is in the national interest to do so, unless

suitable conditions are created and suitable machinery and powers provided to enable it to fight the battle out on terms of greater equality.

The broad conclusions reached, therefore, as a result of the review of pre-war years and the changes brought about by the war, are that former trends of development, with perhaps the slight modifications which make for greater diffusion into country areas, will, unless checked and directed, re-assert themselves after the war. There could, and probably would, be a post-war building boom worse than that of the 1920's, and this, if left to take care of itself, would lead to worse evils than those of its predecessor. The social evils which result from ill-considered or uncontrolled urban spread are well known among town inhabitants; the evils from the rural point of view are no less apparent in the years leading up to the present war. The future of the countryside will be profoundly affected, whether there is a continuance of pre-war trends of industrial and urban development, or a dispersal of large concentrations of population under a Government policy, in other words, whether future constructional development is haphazard or planned.

THE SCOTT COMMITTEE

The Scott Committee was appointed in October, 1941,

> "To consider the conditions which should govern building and other constructional development in country areas consistently with the maintenance of agriculture, and in particular the factors affecting the location of industry, having regard to economic operation, part-time and seasonal employment, the well-being of rural communities and the preservation of rural amenities."

These Terms of Reference were for England and Wales, and did not include Scotland. The Committee, in addition to a great deal of documentation, which was carefully examined, studied over one hundred memoranda specially prepared by 111 Government Departments, authorities, organizations and individuals, and examined oral evidence from representatives of 53 organizations and 18 individuals. They deemed it essential to take the broadest possible view of their duties and examined and heard evidence bearing on the subject matter of their Terms of Reference from as many angles as possible.

The Committee quote the words of H. G. Wells, which

express their own affection for our countryside:—

> "There is no countryside like the English countryside for those who have learned to love it; its firm yet gentle lines of hill and dale, its ordered confusion of features, its deer parks and downland, its castles and stately houses, its hamlets and old churches, its farms and ricks and great barns and ancient trees, its pools and ponds and shining threads of rivers, its flower-starred hedgerows, its orchards and woodland patches, its village greens and kindly inns. Other countrysides have their pleasant aspects, but none such variety, none that shine so steadfastly throughout the year . . . None change scene and character in three miles of walking, nor have so mellow a sunlight nor so diversified a cloudland nor confess the perpetual refreshment of the strong soft winds that blow from off the sea, as our mother England does."

It is that countryside which they hope future generations will enjoy, which they consider it their duty to preserve and which is included in the phrase "the preservation of rural amenities." "But," say the Committee, "we do not want a countryside which behind a smiling face hides much human poverty and misery: and it is for that reason we have given close study to the material needs of the rural population in considering 'the well-being of rural communities.' We have become convinced, if we were not before, that there is an innate love of nature deeply implanted in the heart of man and that the 'drift from the land' has been occasioned in large measure by economic inequalities between town and country rather than by any deep love of supposed urban joys. We are unable to subscribe in any way to the view that the countryman is inferior to the townsman. Indeed, our views have been beautifully stated by G. M. Trevelyan:—

> "Without vision the people perish, and without natural beauty the English people will perish in the spiritual sense. In old days the English lived in the midst of Nature, subject to its influence at every hour. Thus inspired, our ancestors produced their great creations in religion, in song, and in the arts and crafts—common products of a whole people spiritually alive. To-day, most of us are banished to the cities, not without deleterious effects on imagination, inspiration and creative power. But some still live in the country, and

some still come out on holidays to the country and drink in with the zest of a thirsty man the delights of natural beauty, and return to the town re-invigorated in soul."

Agriculture—however vital to the nation in time of war—cannot in peace be maintained in the same position. But the Government, which represents all the major parties, has declared for the continuing support of agriculture, as shown by the phrase in the Terms of Reference "consistently with the maintenance of agriculture." This cannot mean the bolstering up of a decadent agriculture, for that would have been sending the Committee on a false errand. The Committee understands the direction to mean the conditions that will be consistent with the maintenance of a prosperous and progressive agriculture. They realise, too, that the pre-war prevalence of malnutritional diseases must never again be allowed to recur. In short, a vital incentive to the war effort is the presentation of a picture of the better world which lies ahead and which can be achieved, if plans are drawn up and essential preparations made in advance. To delay planning and the legislation needed to make the plans effective until the time for action has come the Committee believes to be a fatal error.

THE FIGURES

TABLE I

Country	Area in square miles	Population	Population per sq. mile
England and Wales	58,340	41,031,000	703
Belgium	11,750	8,250,000	702
Holland	13,514	8,560,000	633
Germany	226,435	78,526,000	347
Italy	130,714	45,056,000	345
France	212,895	42,000,000	197
U.S.A.	3,026,789	131,669,275	43

This table shows that the condition of a large population in relation to land area existed markedly in England and Wales in 1939. Further, in 1939 the figures for England alone were:—

England	50,330	38,552,000	766

This figure exceeds even that of Belgium, which is often quoted as the world's most densely populated national area.

The population is never, of course, spread evenly over the surface of any country. For the last two centuries, "urbanisation"—concentration in towns—has increased remarkably. Here, too, the position of Britain is remarkable, for more than one-third of the population of England and Wales live in Greater London, Birmingham, Manchester, Liverpool, Leeds, Bradford and Tyneside. Over half live in or near the fourteen chief urban centres. Census returns for 1931 showed that over 80 per cent. of the population lived in areas which were "urban" for local government purposes, and that even in districts that are classified as rural, there are many small towns; so that this high figure should probably be increased. We are the most urban nation in the world.

If any compact grouping of over 1,500 people is described as a town, the total population who live outside towns is probably somewhere about six million. A rough estimate can be made of the population living in the open countryside, in small hamlets, single farmhouses and isolated cottages, if the calculation is based upon the number of farmers and farm workers. In 1938, this figure was probably just under a million, including 300,000 for farmers and farmers' relatives (the latter based upon the 1931 census returns). If an average of two dependents is allowed to each of these workers (and this is probably an over-estimate, since the figure includes unmarried youths and women), the total is about 3,000,000. Of these farmers and farm workers, a great number live in villages; it is therefore unlikely that the population of the open countryside, living outside villages, exceeds 2 or 2½ million, and the population in villages is probably somewhere round 3½ - 4 million.

In 1937, the 58,340 square miles or 37,133,000 acres of land in England and Wales were being used as follows:—

82.1 per cent. in agricultural production, including rough grazing;

1.1 per cent. in open land of various kinds not being used for agriculture, but of potential agricultural value;

5.5 per cent. in woodland; and the remaining

11.3 per cent. in buildings, roads and other forms of constructional development, or otherwise unaccounted for in agricultural returns.

In 1938 there were 365,972 holdings in England and Wales,

of which 288,045 or 79 per cent. of the total number were under 100 acres. Of this number 61,685 were between 50 and 100 acres, leaving 226,360 or 62 per cent. under 50 acres —a position which has been practically static over the last seventy years. Mixed farming does not call for a large farm unit. The fields were wanted within reasonable access of the farmhouse and buildings, so that the livestock could be properly cared for and could be driven back easily at night. Transport was difficult and it was a disadvantage to be forced to cart crops or manure for long distances often over farm tracks deep in mud and water.

The structure of English and Welsh farming has therefore determined the building necessary for agriculture, as well as the pattern of its fields and the size of its holdings, its roads and its farm tracks. Mixed farming on a medium-sized unit has meant that on each holding a farmhouse, whose site was often determined by the availability of water, had to be provided for the farmer and his family, together with buildings for animals, storage of crops and implements, and often cottages for workers. So the landscape has become dotted with the familiar clusters of the farmhouse, its buildings standing by themselves, often well away from the nearest village. The workers were obliged to live near their work, particularly where their duties involved looking after livestock; they did not, therefore, live in the village unless it was sufficiently close. The farmer found it necessary to provide the cottages and it was in this way that the "tied" cottage system arose.

THE PICTURE

OUR countryside is like a multi-coloured chequer board. Its chief characteristic is its attractive patchwork appearance, with an infinite variety of small, odd-shaped fields of brown ploughland or green pasture, bounded by twisting hedges, narrow winding lanes, small woodlands and copses and isolated trees and hedgerow timber; quiet streams and placid rivers; the whole giving place in remoter parts to open moorland or rolling downs. Most of the farmhouses and buildings are isolated; small groups consisting of a farmhouse with its buildings, and perhaps a cottage or two, sometimes huddled under the lee of a hill, sometimes clustered in the shelter of a small wood, are scattered over the landscape,

often at some distance from the nearest village. The villages themselves with their churches, their inns, their cottages and probably a garage and a petrol pump, perhaps grouped round a green, perhaps straggling along a main road, are dotted over the countryside in large numbers. At rarer intervals there are the market towns with their streets—busy at least on market days—their shops, their cinemas and their small industries—with perhaps an abbey or a cathedral in its close, or else a barracks bringing with it the status of a garrison town. Diverse in plan and character these towns all serve the same purpose, forming the main commercial and social centres for the surrounding countryside. In addition, widely scattered but particularly near villages and towns and on the coast, are the country seats of the landed gentry, or the smaller, more modern country dwellings of townspeople —the "desirable country residences" or "week-end bungalows" which either singly or in groups have increasingly tended to spring up in many parts of the countryside over the last two decades.

The pattern of an inhabited countryside is brought about in two ways. The age-long processes of geology have made for man the hills, valleys and plains which he inherits to-day; but he has done much by his agriculture to increase, indeed to create, the beauty of that heritage. While man's activities are limited by the geographical configuration of the landscape; while he cannot mould and shape it at will, he can, and does, adapt it to suit his purpose. Such adaptations are primarily the result of man's economic needs, but they may also arise from less utilitarian causes—his love of beauty for its own sake and his desire to create beauty, as in the case of many English country parks.

The landscape of England and Wales is a striking example of the inter-dependence between the satisfaction of man's material wants and the creation of beauty. The pattern and the beauty of the countryside as we know them to-day are largely the work of man during the past few centuries. Its present appearance is not by any means entirely the work of nature and it is not enduring, for nature is dynamic, never static. If land were left uncultivated, if downs and mountains were not grazed by cattle or sheep, the countryside would gradually but inevitably return to its former natural condition of forest in the valleys and on the lower slopes, and a scrub of brambles, thorn bushes and bracken on the higher levels

—unless, of course, many thousands of men instead of many thousands of animals were employed to keep nature in check by cutting bracken, uprooting bushes, and keeping down scrub and undergrowth. Experience has shown how quickly land can revert to an unkempt, wild and ragged condition, even where it is only neglected and not wholly abandoned. The beauty and pattern of the countryside are the direct result of the cultivation of the soil and there is no antagonism between use and beauty.

Our land has both scenic beauty and agricultural value. The best agricultural land in England and Wales rivals any other in the world. On the other hand, the quality of the land varies from, for instance, rich arable stretches in the Fens, or fertile grazing pastures in the Midlands, to poor light land such as the heaths of the New Forest or the mountain moorlands of the West. No complete soil survey of the country has yet been made; but the Land Utilisation Society has made a general classification of land according to its actual and potential production and its inherent fertility. This classification, based on present and past land utilisation and such other evidence in the form of soil and vegetation surveys as is available, including local knowledge, divides the land into ten principal types, from the finest farmland (1) to land agriculturally almost useless, such as shingle spits and rock outcrops (10). The first four categories—the good agricultural lands, arable and grass—roughly cover 16,579,500 acres or 44.2 per cent. of the land surface of England and Wales. The next two—lands of moderate quality—cover about 12,886,500 acres or 34.2 per cent. of the land surface; the last four categories are poor quality land, mountain moorland, lowland heath, ill-drained heavy land, rough marsh pasture and saltings, covering 7,423,000 acres or 19.8 per cent. of the land surface. The remaining 1.8 per cent. of land is occupied by the chief towns; smaller towns, villages, roads, etc., are included in the acreages of the type of land they cover.

In 1941 a Types of Farming Map prepared by the Ministry of Agriculture was published by the Land Utilisation Survey and seventeen types of farming were distinguished in England and Wales. The first five of these, based mainly on permanent pasture, included grass dairying, as in Cheshire; the fattening of cattle, sheep and lambs as on the famous grazing pastures of Leicestershire and Northamptonshire; and the rearing

and grazing of sheep in the hilly districts of the lower Pennines, Wales and the Lake District.

The next six types include mixed farming types, based on a variety of production and on farms with both arable and permanent grass. Such examples are to be found in the farms on the Cumberland coast, or in parts of the Chilterns or West Sussex, where production is based on the dairy, but considerable amounts of fodder crops or cash crops (4), such as wheat and vegetables, are grown; or in the Eden Valley and parts of Herefordshire, where rearing of livestock is the main business, but where, for example, fruit, hops or barley are also grown; or again in the chalk belt of southern central England, where in the large farms of Wiltshire, Hampshire, Berkshire and Dorset corn, sheep and dairying are the main production; or again on the clay soils of Lincolnshire, Huntingdonshire and Bedfordshire, where wheat and cattle are the principal enterprise.

The final group of six types comprises the arable lands where crops and market garden produce are the chief forms of production. In some of these types the farming is mixed, though mainly based on arable crops; cattle, sheep, lambs and pigs are fattened, while cash crops of sugar beet or wheat are extensively grown. There are many such farms in the Eastern Counties. The corn and sheep, or sheep and barley, farms of Norfolk, of the chalk wolds of East Yorkshire and of the sandy Sherwood Forest area of Nottinghamshire, are other examples. In the Fen country of Lincolnshire, Norfolk and the Isle of Ely, or in the Lancashire plain round Liverpool, the farms are more wholly arable, based on production of crops which give a cash return, *e.g.*, wheat, potatoes, sugar beet and vegetables. Market garden holdings devoted mainly to vegetables and fruit are chiefly found in the really good soil, such as the Vale of Evesham, the Wisbech area of the Isle of Ely, areas east and west of London, or the glasshouse districts of the Lea Valley.

THE PAST FORTY YEARS

In the past 100 years, many changes have taken place in agriculture. These changes may not have made much difference to the general pattern of the countryside, but they have had a marked effect upon its appearance and upon

rural life. The repeal of the Corn Laws had only a limited direct effect upon British agriculture for some years. But as production, based on the ranch and prairie systems, increased on the fertile virgin lands of the United States, Canada, the Argentine, Australia and New Zealand, so imports of cheap food and later of animal feeding stuffs from abroad gradually brought about changes in British farming. The growth of the population made it increasingly impossible to feed our own people from our own land, and the development of more rapid and efficient means of transport made it increasingly easy to import the less perishable commodities. Many farmers in this country turned their mixed farming to those forms of production which did not have to face competition from abroad; milk, eggs, vegetables, high quality meat and stock. This process was helped by the plentiful supplies of cheap imported animal feeding stuffs, the volume of which reached, in the years before 1939, the very large figure of 7½ to 8 million tons a year. In consequence, many farmers ceased to grow their own fodder crops and many holdings were put down or, worse still, allowed to tumble down almost entirely to grass, while much of the land deteriorated to rough grazing.

This change-over to grass farming meant a decline in arable acreage. In 1871 the total amount of agricultural land in England and Wales, excluding rough grazing, was 26,322,000 acres, of which 14,946,000 acres were devoted to arable cultivation and 11,376,000 acres to grassland. In 1900, the arable acreage was 12,217,208 acres: in 1910, 11,320,444 acres; for a brief period during the war of 1914-18, this trend was arrested, when unrestricted submarine warfare forced the country to rely on its own land to produce a much greater quantity of the nation's food. But the repeal of the Corn Production Acts in 1921—which had provided for the payment of a subsidy to producers of home-grown wheat and oats, if the average prices fell below certain prescribed minimum prices—restored the downward trend. It was even accelerated: and in 1925 the figures of arable acreage were 10,682,053 acres, and in 1938, 8,877,712.

It was not only foreign competition which caused changes. During the years before the war of 1914-18 and since, rising taxation and death duties seriously reduced the ability of many landowners to make improvements or to maintain their farms in good condition. Many estates were heavily

mortgaged. Immediately after 1918, landlords sold in an improved land market and numerous large estates were broken up; to retain their farms, many tenants bought them at high prices and with borrowed money. Capital was locked up in the land, which resulted in less money for working capital and became a source of considerable embarrassment in the general world depression. Many farmers were impoverished: in such cases, necessity urged the quick cash return, rather than the maintenance of the fertility of the land.

To meet low prices, farmers endeavoured by one means or another to reduce their costs. Labour has always been the main item in agricultural costs and the result of fixing county minimum wages for agricultural workers under the Agricultural Wages (Regulation) Act of 1924 had a marked effect. Farmers therefore tried to reduce their wages bill by cutting down the number of farm workers employed; this often meant the neglect of ordinary maintenance work on the farm—the cleaning of ditches and drains, the trimming and laying of hedges. The worst fields went out of production and became derelict: many farms were turned over to forms of production requiring less manpower, as, for instance, from arable to dairy farming. The decline in arable farming would doubtless have been far worse, had it not been for the advent of the tractor, making possible far more work with far less labour. Mechanical equipment as an aid to farming ushered in a new era and made possible the wartime expansion of production which is still proceeding.

After 1931 the Government passed various measures to check the decline of agriculture. These mostly took the form of assistance by means of subsidies to particular branches of farming, as each became particularly depressed. Assistance was given for wheat, oats and barley, milk and milk products, sugar beet, cattle, sheep and pigs. This piecemeal assistance had an unbalancing effect on farming, by encouraging in some cases too great an increase in one crop at the expense of another. Farmers were also given grants to buy lime and fertilisers, and towards land drainage. In addition, the Government took active steps by legislation and other means to stimulate the promotion of marketing schemes intended to assist farmers in obtaining good prices, as well as to benefit the consumer; and experiments in the reorganization of food processing and distribution were also tentatively tried.

These steps met with some success, but they only slowed the decline: they did not reverse it.

The changed conditions of agriculture were visible in many parts of the countryside. Less arable land was to be seen; the number of derelict fields, rank with coarse matted grass, thistles, weeds and brambles, multiplied; ditches became choked and no longer served as effective drains; hedges became overgrown and straggled over the edges of the fields; gates and fences fell into disrepair; farm roads were left unmade. Signs of decay were to be seen also in many of the buildings. Barns and sheds were not put in order; farmhouses were allowed to deteriorate; agricultural cottages went from bad to worse. While seen from afar, it retained the beauty of the old broad pattern, the landscape of 1938 had in many districts, assumed a neglected and unkempt appearance.

THE DRIFT FROM THE LAND

AGRICULTURAL depression had another effect. It encouraged the drift of labour from the land. Between 1921-24, the average number of workers, male and female, engaged in agriculture was 816,000. In 1938 this number had shrunk by 25 per cent. to 539,000. In the same period, the number of male workers fell from 587,000 to 472,000—a drop of nearly 20 per cent.

This drift had various causes. There was the push from the farmer, trying to reduce his labour costs; and there was the "pull" of the other industries, which offered better wages and working conditions, better living conditions and the attraction of town life. The strength of this pull varied from time to time and from place to place, but it was particularly noticeable in the year or so before the war, as various activities started in connection with national defence. The drift was greatest among the younger generation, for whom there remained but few opportunities in the country and to whom industry and town life appealed most, a fact shown by the fall in the numbers of young male workers under 21—a fall of some 75,000 or nearly 44 per cent. between 1921-24 and 1938, as compared with a fall of 103,000—19 per cent., in the number of male workers over 21 during the same period. Love of the country and of country life is an innate national characteristic and in a large number

of cases the "pull" of the towns in economic. The countryside suffered from a grave inferiority of wages and opportunities for advancement and from inadequate housing and services.

The depressed condition of agriculture inevitably had repercussions on other rural occupations, with the result that migration of labour was not confined to workers on the land. Thus village craftsmen such as blacksmiths, saddlers, carpenters and wheelwrights also felt the wave of depression. In spite of efforts by such organisations as the Rural Industries Bureau to keep alive and foster village crafts by means of training, advice and organisation, many of the younger men, who in former days would have traditionally followed in their father's footsteps, answered the call of the city or of the factory or obtained contractor's work in the countryside. Even many of those employed in the ancillary occupations of rural life—assistants in village shops, rural road workers and railwaymen—wherever possible "bettered" themselves by getting a job in the town. Even in the County Constabulary a move to a town was looked upon as "promotion." Wives and daughters also followed the example of, or sometimes set the example to, their menfolk by going into factories. The result was a growing depopulation of the countryside and a set-back to country life.

One of the principal causes of this drift of the younger population from country to town was undoubtedly the great disparity between rural and urban wages. There was a wide difference between the average wage of an agricultural worker and that of an unskilled labourer in industry, in spite of the fact that in agriculture even the general worker must be highly skilled. For instance, in 1923 the average agricultural wage ranged from about 25s. to about 32s. for a week of 50 to 54 hours, while the rates for unskilled industrial labourers ranged from about 35s. to over 50s. for a week varying from about 42 to 48 hours. In June, 1939, the average agricultural wage had risen to a range of about 32s. to 37s. 6d. and the average rates for unskilled labourers in other industries to a range of about 43s. to 60s., in both cases for about the same number of working hours as in 1923. It is, of course, true that some agricultural workers had certain benefits such as low cottage rents and free or low-priced produce of one kind and another from the farm, but even when allowance is made for such perquisites the

disparity remained great. This disparity was equally great between the village craftsman and his fellow town worker.

The conditions in which rural workers had to live were another contributory reason for the drift. Housing, in particular, was a serious problem. for rural cottages generally were far below the modern standards of housing for the working classes. In spite of the falling numbers of the rural population, there was a growing shortage of housing accommodation in many districts, largely due to cottages being rented by others than farm workers. Over the country generally, many rural workers were living in cottages which should have been condemned as uninhabitable.

The wages of agricultural workers were too low for them to pay an economic rent for the right kind of house and in consequence the building of cottages offered no attraction to the speculative builder. Such housing accommodation as had been built specially for agricultural workers had been erected almost entirely by the landowners, including farmers owning their own farms. As a result many workers were living in "tied" cottages or in cottages which, although not "tied" to a farm, belonged to a local estate owner and were held by the worker on an understood condition that he was employed on work connected with the estate.

The worker in a "tied" cottage is liable to be evicted at any time he has a dispute with his employer or when, for any reason, the employer decides to replace him by another worker. He does not enjoy protection under the Rent Restriction Acts, as he can be evicted without any alternative accommodation being provided for him. If he loses his job he also loses his home.

Another great disadvantage of the "tied" cottage is that, being on or near farm premises, the worker and his family are often isolated from village life. This is a particular hardship on women—and more especially on younger women—who in the majority of cases find such an existence lonely and inconvenient because of the distance from a shopping centre or from a school for the children. As a result, the health of the women and children, as well as the education of the family, which should be paramount, may suffer. There is also the added difficulty of providing isolated cottages with modern conveniences such as electricity, water supply, or a nearby telephone.

On the other hand, from the farmer's point of view, there

is a great advantage in the workers—particularly those in charge of livestock—living on the spot. They contend that the health and care of the animals would suffer gravely if the horseman or cowman were not readily available by night as well as by day, should necessity arise. Moreover, with the long hours that must often be worked in agriculture, it is a great saving whether of working time or of their own brief leisure time if workers live close at hand. In addition, while housing in rural areas remains scarce, great difficulties may be caused by cottages not being tied to the job. Workers may leave the land and yet continue to live in their cottages with the result that accommodation is not available for the agricultural workers essential for the working of surrounding farms.

Apart from actual shortage of cottages, the general standard of housing equipment and services was—and still is—very bad. Thousands of cottages have no water laid on, no gas or electric light, no third bedroom, and often only one living room with no separate cooking or scullery accommodation. For the great majority of rural workers a bathroom is a rare luxury. In many cases, even the modern country cottages seem to have been planned with little or no regard to the special requirements of a country worker. There is often no shed or room for drying wet clothes; no storage for food stuffs and seeds; no sheds for garden tools or bicycles. These conditions undoubtedly drove many of the better type of young rural workers into other occupations. Many a young farm worker, wanting to get married, has found it impossible to rent a cottage at all, or his prospective bride found it difficult to reconcile herself to living in such a cottage as described. As a result, they either deserted the country for the town, or, according to the evidence of the Federation of Women's Institutes, restricted the size of their family to one child.

Much had been done to provide electricity, gas and water supplies in the rural areas. But although the electricity supply companies had done their best to develop rural areas in pre-war years, the British Electrical Development Association, in their evidence to the Committee, estimated that in 1939 about one-third of all dwellings in rural areas were not yet electrified. A large proportion of these were farms and farm cottages which were expensive and difficult to connect owing to isolation. It has been estimated that only about twenty-five

thousand to thirty thousand agricultural holdings, out of a total of 365,972, were served with electricity in 1938. Gas, often preferred for heating and cooking, was mainly restricted to small towns and larger villages, owing to the cost of laying mains and supply pipes.

As regards water supplies, a considerable extension of piped supplies in rural areas was achieved as the result of the £1,000,000 Government grant made for this purpose under the Rural Water Supply Act of 1934; but despite this, it was estimated in June, 1939, that of the 11,186 parishes in England and Wales, 3,432 were entirely without piped water supplies and at least a million people, *i.e.*, one-seventh of the rural population (which, as noted above, includes dwellers in many small towns and villages) were without piped water. Here again it was the agricultural worker or the farmer living in an isolated cottage or farmhouse who had to go without. The position of sewerage was even worse: at least 5,186 parishes were entirely without sewerage systems in 1939.

This drift from the country was continuing up to the outbreak of war. There is no doubt that the main causes were the low wage received by agricultural workers, the bad standard of housing and the lack in many districts of proper water supplies, sewerage and electricity. There were further disadvantages. In the majority of small villages, the elementary school has not been in a position to prepare children for scholarship examinations, and for those children who, in spite of this, have gained scholarships, attendance at a secondary school has often been impossible owing to transport difficulties. In general, the services provided in the village for education, health, etc., were of a standard far inferior to their urban counterpart. While this was partly due to financial reasons and the difficulties of administration, it was also undoubtedly due in part to the fact that social service regulation was largely made by people who lived in towns. To give only one example, the new method of analgesia in child-birth for women in their own homes is available in cities, but the regulation that a second qualified person should be present at the administration makes it impracticable in villages.

Until the 19th century, life in the villages still had some features of the manorial system, the landlord or squire frequently took a paternal or even dictatorial interest in village affairs, and he and his family acted as leaders and

organisers of most of the village activities. The Church, too, took a prominent part, for country parsons often acted not only as spiritual leaders, but participated in the day-to-day life of the villagers. But since then there has been a great decline in the influence of both local landowners and local clergy. Two factors have no doubt been the break-up of some of the bigger estates and the impoverishment of many landowners. Bicycles and buses may have encouraged younger people in villages to go to the neighbouring town for their amusement, but they have also made for some social life within the village itself—village dances, whist drives, dances and dramatic entertainments; wireless has also helped to give the country new and wider interests in public affairs, as well as opportunities for recreation and education which have never been enjoyed before.

The typical English or Welsh village has a corporate life of its own, which can be—and it is important that it should be—one of its attractive features. It is a rare exception for a villager to be left out and to lead a lonely life, such as is often the case in a suburban housing estate or a block of flats. There has often been a cleavage between "church" and "chapel," but recently this breach has become narrower —bridged by such organisations as the British Legion, the Young Farmers' Clubs, branches of the Union of Agricultural Workers, and recently, by the Home Guard. The Women's Institutes have played a great part in the women's lives. Cricket or football clubs, darts and bowls clubs, musical and dramatic societies, dances and whist drives, have formed the recreational life of the village. Village athletics are very far from dead; the major difficulty has been the drift of the young to the towns and many an old-established cricket and football club has been unable to raise a team and has faded out.

The Women's Institutes have proved the organising ability of country women and their activities have shown that the social needs of the village can, to a great extent, be met and co-operative enterprises undertaken by village communities. In some counties local education authorities have helped forward the adult education of women by using the Institute organisations. Help in the provision of teachers in domestic and agricultural subjects, in health matters and in handicrafts and the organisation of music and drama, have made many villages far more alive than they were

before. But in this respect, as in many others, the facilities provided by county authorities vary and in many counties the demand for classes from Women's Institutes cannot be met, even for such subjects as cooking, upholstery and other domestic crafts. Boy Scouts, Girl Guides, Young Farmers' Clubs and other youth organisations, have done much to improve conditions of life for young people in villages.

THE EFFECTS OF URBAN GROWTH ON THE COUNTRYSIDE

ONE of the main effects of the spread of urban areas and of other forms of constructional development into country areas has been the loss of open land. The following table shows the amount of agricultural land which in recent years has been lost in these various ways.

Year	Buildings and General Constructional Development	Sports Grounds	Miscellaneous			Total
			Aerodromes or Air Ministry	War Office	Other or Unexplained	
Average of 7 yrs. 1927-8 to 1933–4	Acres 42,000	Acres 10,000	Acres 600	Acres 200	Acres 700	Acres 53,500
1934–5	57,000	11,000	3,000	200	2,600	73,800
1935–6	55,000	13,000	10,000	1,500	—	79,500
1936–7	56,000	11,000	10,900	2,000	100	80,000
1937–8	56,000	14,000	12,200	4,700	700	87,600
1938–9	54,000	10,000	24,500	8,800	2,100	99,400
Total of 12 years	572,000	129,000	64,800	18,600	10,400	794,800
Average per year	47,650	10,750	5,400	1,550	850	66,200

These are gross figures. To offset them it is necessary to make allowance for land which, apparently lost to agriculture through building and the other causes set out in the above table, has subsequently been returned to it. In each of the three years immediately before 1939 the amount of land thus returned was estimated at somewhere about 10 per cent. of the gross total estimated to have been lost. So that the

average net amount of land occupied by various kinds of buildings and other constructional development between 1927 and 1939 was about 60,000 acres a year.

There is abundant evidence to show that in the past little or no regard has been paid to agricultural considerations in selecting land for constructional development. Neither the quality of the land itself nor the effect on surrounding farms has been taken into account. Sites for development have been chosen, for instance, for accessibility of road and rail transport, availability of public utility services and suitability of land for building purposes, and, since the development value of a site far exceeds its value as agricultural land—even where it is of the highest agricultural quality—there has been nothing to hinder the developer from taking his choice. It is often the best agricultural land—level, well-drained stretches with good soil—which is most suitable and least expensive from the building point of view. Similarly, for the same reasons, the requirements of aerodromes have almost always resulted in taking first-class land. Holdings on the fringes of towns where development is most likely to take place, are often the most intensively cultivated, much of the land being devoted to market gardening.

Since profits arise out of the sale of land for factory or housing development, it is hardly surprising that landowners and farmers in restricted financial circumstances should have been unable to hold out against the pressure of builders. Often, indeed, land on the outskirts of or near towns and cities was held by landowners, and even by farmers themselves, primarily with a view to sale sooner or later for building purposes. The agricultural use of land near urban centres seemed to be regarded, in many instances, merely as an interim use pending sale for development. As a result farming was often bad; the farmer lived under the threat of eviction and farmed the land poorly and for quick cash returns. In other cases, the land was not farmed at all; the speculative buyers allowed it to lie idle until the market was considered suitable for a sale. This is why so much derelict land was to be found on the borders of built-up areas. The threat of the builder overshadowed and sterilised it.

There was another possible cause of harm to agricultural production from the noxious fumes and poisonous effluents discharged by certain types of factories. Smoke or dust from factories or quarries has at times ruined agricultural crops

for miles around, while in other instances effluents from such factories as milk or canning factories have made streams and rivers running through neighbouring farms unfit for watering the stock. Such factories have also frequently marred the beauty of surrounding country.

Extractive industries are another example of detriment caused by industrial development, to agricultural land, and to the amenities of the countryside. While it would not be in the national interest to leave rich deposits of coal, iron ore and other mineral resources permanently unworked, nevertheless, disastrous may be the effect which their working often has upon the countryside. A mere quarry on a hillside may or may not be a blot on the landscape; it depends on the circumstances: besides, the passage of time often clothes it with trees. On flat land dredging is the normal method of working gravel; usually the land is lost to agriculture and the abandoned pits become filled with water—a loss which may be unnecessary. When the surface soil is kept and restored, the lowering of the surface is not necessarily fatal to agricultural use if drainage is possible. The eyesores created by colliery tips and slag heaps at iron and steel works are notorious. What can be achieved by levelling is shown by work carried out by isolated public-spirited mine-owners in Lancashire and elsewhere: the successful afforestation experiments in the Midlands can also be seen. The fearful desolation left by open-cast working of iron ore as in Northamptonshire is not so well known. Apart from surface working, however, underground mining however deep below the surface causes the whole overlying burden to subside and, by dislocating the surface drainage systems, may ruin much agricultural land, leaving it water-logged and pitted by stagnant pools where subsidence has occurred. This surface trouble presents a problem which must be attacked as and when it occurs.

The way in which uncontrolled building has destroyed the beauties of the countryside in many parts of England and Wales has long been the subject of complaint by those who are interested in the loveliness of English and Welsh landscapes and has been noted in the preceding chapter. Although the Restriction of Ribbon Development Act, 1935, may have had some preventive effect, the total mileage of unsightly building development both before and after 1935 is considerable.

It is not only scattered building development which has disfigured the countryside. In many cases houses or buildings which are suitably sited are equally destructive of the beauty of the landscape. Too often villas of the suburban type, modern concrete erections or temporary buildings of corrugated iron have completely spoiled the landscape, or some village, through their incongruity. Some action has been taken to control design and external appearance only in parts of the country, and even where such control has been in operation, its administrative enforcement has in many cases been unsatisfactory. Agricultural buildings are specifically excluded from control under the 1932 Act, so that many buildings have been erected out of harmony with their surroundings, whereas without additional expense they could have been both pleasing in appearance and economically adequate.

The effect of constructional development on urban or suburban lines upon the countryside goes far beyond either its physical or its aesthetic effects. It has had repercussions on economic and social life in rural areas. When industry comes actually into the countryside itself, the disturbance to rural life which, good or bad, inevitably results is brought directly home to a wider circle and brings within its scope men—and their families—who do not wish to live in towns. Cases had occurred, particularly in the years immediately prior to the war, when for strategic reasons defence industries were placed more extensively in rural areas, and in such instances there is evidence that many rural workers left their work for a factory job.

Even where the rural worker himself did not go into the factory, grave discontent was often caused. An agricultural worker naturally felt discontented when he saw young men and women—perhaps his own son or daughter—earning more money than himself, in a routine factory job with shorter hours, and none of the discomforts of working out of doors in all weathers. Sometimes factory workers brought from a distance secured in competition with the rural worker any accommodation available in the neighbourhood because they could afford to pay a higher rent; or they were housed at a far higher standard than the rural worker could ever hope to attain on his lower wages. These things caused discontent.

THE IMPACT OF TOWN ON COUNTRY

WHILE the towns exerted the "pull" from the country which has just been described during the two decades between wars, they also exerted an increasingly strong "push" into it. For as long as towns continue to grow—and grow horizontally—they must continue to occupy more land. Agricultural depression had so weakened the resistance of the countryside to the encroachment of the town, that building land could be bought readily enough, irrespective of its agricultural usage or quality. Far larger tracts than were needed for immediate development were bought up cheap and allowed to lie idle and derelict. So the towns sprawled over the countryside with a terrible wastage of agricultural land, and in a manner which prevented the development of any real community life in the suburban fringes themselves.

For one cause or another, at the beginning of this century most English towns, especially the industrial towns, were unsatisfactory in many ways. Practically all of them were in some parts ugly, congested, inconvenient and only moderately healthy, if indeed they were not definitely unhealthy, as some of them certainly were. An appreciation of the pleasures of natural scenery and a yearning for them, together with a desire to live nearer to country conditions, developed in many town dwellers, who wished to escape from conditions which they had come to believe were natural to an urban way of life. These people were at least open to the appeal of any attractive alternative way of living which might be offered, especially if it meant living in places surrounded by trees and flowers, open spaces and fresh air. The motor car made escape from the old urban conditions increasingly possible and the story of this century has therefore been one of steadily increasing encroachment of the town on the country—a steadily increasing "suburbanisation" of the country areas adjoining the towns.

It has taken many forms. In the main, it has occurred on the outskirts of existing towns, where Council housing schemes and private building estates have simply added to the towns. But sometimes the development has taken the form of a new growth, some distance away from the town edge; or of an accretion round some smaller settlement, such as a small town or village within easy reach of the town centre. Sometimes it has been merely strung out along

existing roads in hideous ribbon development; and sometimes there have been mere scatterings or loose groupings of houses in the open country, on the coast, or near some "beauty spot"; places where live the people with few ties, urban or rural, the business man whose attendance at his office is but occasional, the week-ending townsman, and those whom the census returns as "not gainfully employed," especially the retired and elderly.

Industry, too, has been subject to this suburban grip. Motor transport has freed the dependence of certain types of industry on a railway service and the extension of electrical transmission has provided them with an alternative for coal as a source of power. These two causes have virtually produced an industrial revolution, and its social and economic consequences have been as far-reaching as those of its predecessor. It could change the internal geography of this country in a similar manner. The effect is both national and local. We have already noted the movement of industrial labour from some of the older areas to other parts of the country—a drift, especially, from the depressed areas of the north of England and South Wales towards London and the south-east. Light industry has thus shown a considerable degree of *national* mobility. While it is not the case that many industrial companies have actually moved their main factories from, say, Tyneside to London, many old concerns have ceased to operate in the depressed areas and many new concerns have started in the Midlands and the south. Large numbers of factories or workshops in many different light industries have been started in rural or semi-rural areas, relying upon electricity and the motor lorry. The ever-widening fringes of Greater Birmingham or Greater London or some other town have provided available labour; sometimes they have also assured a considerable *local* market for a new product, which is tried out locally before national distribution. But industry has also shown a striking local mobility. A factory can now be established in a field at the edge of the town, or right out in the country some miles beyond; its choice of site requires only a reasonably good road and a bus route along which its workers can travel from the town. The principal roads that lead out of London have a scatter of factories just off them; and the same kind of thing occurs in the neighbourhood of many other towns. There are no available statistics as to the number of new

factories established in rural areas during recent years, but by far the greater part of the total number must have been established on open land beyond built-up edges of a town.

The suburban spread of houses and factories has been accentuated by the construction of other buildings—or, it would be truer to say, by other erections, for many of the ramshackle creations which so often serve as "Wayside Cafés," snack-bars, filling stations and such like, cannot be described as buildings. The nameless messes, the assemblages of caravans and converted buses and encampments which have littered and spoilt many a once-charming stretch of coast-line, lake-side and river-side, cannot properly be called villages; but they form more than a passing intrusion of the town into the country. These disfigurements of rural beauty are not primarily designed to catch the eye of the passer-by, but public advertisements are, whether on houses in the villages or on hoardings in the fields. Their blatant colours have been deliberately chosen to catch his eye and force him to look at them. As the townsman speeds outwards through the suburbs to the country they pursue him the whole way, their incongruous colouring interrupting and destroying the quiet picture of the countryside on which he wants to gaze undistracted.

Another development which expresses in a different form the physical impact of town on countryside has been the establishment in country places, and especially along the coast, of permanent and semi-permanent camps for townspeople on holiday. Several hundreds of these camps had been set up before 1939. They varied greatly in size and character. Some were very large, accommodating thousands of people: they were almost towns in themselves—summer-time towns providing for a brief season the pleasures not ordinarily obtainable in the everyday towns. Some were small and provided quieter and more intimate conditions. Some were well designed for their purpose, laid out in an orderly way, built of trim semi-permanent materials: while others were squalid and disordered in the extreme. But whatever their size and condition they all reflected clearly still another new aspect of the clash of town and country, and one which foretold similar developments yet to come.

Still another development has been the extensive widening, or the new construction of many important roads in rural areas. These roads are rarely, if ever, required for local rural

needs (though once they are constructed they may be useful for some of those purposes), but they may have an important effect on rural conditions. A by-pass road, for example, which has relieved a village of a continuous stream of heavy traffic which has no immediate purpose there has often been an immense benefit to the village. Some lengths of new main roads and by-passes are very beautiful, their design quite excellent; especially many recently constructed ones, where earlier mistakes have not been repeated. Many others would have been equally good had the land on either side been kept as open country instead of being ruined by ribbons of ill-sited and ill-designed building destructive both of the beauty and utility of the new road. In other cases, road improvements, however useful to through traffic, have been anything but a benefit in other respects. They have been roughly planted on to the countryside rather than planned as part of it—an inevitable result of the planning of roads not being part of fully co-ordinated national planning. Some have been unnecessarily wasteful from the point of view of the nation's agriculture in their ruthless severing of farms.

THE TOWNSMAN IN THE COUNTRY

Even those town-dwellers who have not left the old town areas for new suburbs have recently made increasing demands on the countryside. They have done so quite properly, though the countryman has sometimes been resentful of their intrusion—a resentment usually based on the lack of understanding of country ways too frequently exhibited by the townsman.

The growth of what may be grouped together as "open-air" organisations of various kinds, has been one of the most notable and praiseworthy developments of this century. Such movements as the Youth Hostels' Association and the Ramblers' Association have brought the young town-dweller into the countryside, have afforded him many delights and benefits that his prototype of thirty or forty years ago rarely enjoyed. The increasing use of the motor car has, happily, brought the country to the older generations also. But when people for a long time have been cut off from the enjoyment of an amenity they have to learn again how to use it for their own sakes and for the sake of others. And this the townsman has had to learn to do with the country. In the first exuberance of his reintroduction to the countryside in the nineteen-

twenties and the nineteen-thirties his conduct there was often regrettable—especially the townsman who was not a member of one of the "open-air organisations," for these have themselves done much to educate their members in country habits. A good deal of harm was wrought in country life, places and things. But the townsman's experience in and understanding of the country has developed, although even up to the outbreak of war there was still plenty of room for further improvement in this direction. The townsman's demands on the country are no mere passing fashion, and from now on he is likely to claim his place there and demand that he should be given all reasonable facilities for the enjoyment of what, after all, is the heritage of all. This is as it should be, but neither a healthy agriculture nor a contented countryside can be maintained unless it is fully recognised that to personal rights there is necessarily attached the full and frank acceptance of personal duties to others and of considerable thoughtfulness towards them.

The position with regard to the "week-ender" was somewhat different from this, though against him too there have been bitter complaints of selfishness, want of sympathy and unwillingness to learn the ways of the country. One grievance was that, with his greater means, he had been able to acquire cottages that would ordinarily have been available for the countryman, thereby reducing the number of cottages available for agricultural workers. Further, the amused contempt typified by such expressions as "country bumpkin" with which many a comparatively well-to-do townsman has regarded the countryman, and the latter's envy of a higher money-income and greater leisure, have had a disturbing effect upon the rural population and have been apt to engender a feeling of discontent.

There remained then at the outbreak of the war, a degree of misunderstanding, even of antagonism, between countryman and townsman. There is much yet to be done to create the mutual understanding and sympathy that are necessary if all sections of the community are to enjoy the countryside which, if it is the heritage of all, is in the guardianship of the countryman.

"PROS" AND "CONS"

Urban and rural mentalities seem in the past to have had little in common. The town worker is not always easily

assimilated into country life. He is not, however, the only one to blame. The rural worker is apt to regard all newcomers with some suspicion. He tends to resent the intrusion of outsiders.

From the countryman's point of view the townsman often exhibits a regrettable lack of manners. He frequently does not understand country ways or needs; he tramples down the crops; he leaves gates open; or he lets his dog roam over sheep-grazing country. Quite unconsciously he even destroys the very beauty he comes to seek by carrying home armfuls of wild flowers and scattering litter over the land. He, for his part, is often annoyed by the restrictions which, sometimes in self-defence, sometimes in mere unreasoned dislike of the townsman, the landowner or farmer places over his land. The townsman complains bitterly of not being allowed to walk where he pleases and at being confronted with notices of "No Trespassers" on all sides.

It has been suggested by a number of witnesses that the difficulties caused by the impact of industrial development on the countryside do not necessarily follow. They have put the case that the introduction of industry, or at any rate of certain types of industry, into the countryside, far from causing harm, has often had beneficial effects. Some have said that a judicious mixture of town and country in this way has been a good means of revivifying rural life and bringing back prosperity to the countryside.

Those who in evidence favoured the introduction of industry into rural areas hold that it is of the utmost importance to bring about a closer union between town and country and to give to each a greater understanding of the life and outlook of the other. They think that by bringing factory and rural workers together as neighbours, this aim is to some extent achieved, and that the more modern and progressive outlook of the urban worker revitalises country life. They contend that incompatibility between urban and rural mentalities can be overcome and that each benefits the other.

They have also pointed out that the right kind of factory—though there may be few such—can provide employment for the families, including the wives and daughters, of rural workers, giving them an outlet for their energies and preventing the isolation and loneliness of the countrywoman's existence. They say it puts more money into the pockets of rural families and enables them to obtain more of the

comforts of life. Factories relying mainly or largely upon female labour also employ juvenile labour and provide alternative employment for younger members of the family who are at present often compelled to leave home because they are not needed on the land. It is not in human nature for all country boys to wish to become agricultural workers or farmers, or for all country girls to wish to become their wives. They may wish to earn their living in other ways, and if industry is not near at hand, they will go into the towns, breaking up the family when they are still young.

Some witnesses have suggested that factories bring in their wake an improvement in the physical and social amenities of the neighbourhood. Electricity, water supply, and sometimes gas, as well as some system of sewage disposal, are necessary to factories, and the country areas round about benefit from the introduction of these services. It has been argued that the coming of factories into the rural areas brings better transport facilities and the recreation and social life of factory workers in which country workers can share.

Obviously, the effects of the introduction of industry depend largely on the type of factory, its size, location and other factors. Before the present war most building took place on the outskirts of existing towns. Factories were rarely established in the heart of the country, or in small villages, although other development, such as housing, aerodromes or defence works, took place frequently in purely rural areas. The effects of other constructional development such as housing will depend on its character and siting. No doubt there have been cases where the coming of a factory into the countryside has had all or some of the beneficial effects suggested. In other cases, the effects have been quite the reverse, and even the advantages which might reasonably be expected to follow, such as bringing electricity and water supply, or provision of social and recreational facilities, have not in fact materialised for rural workers. Electricity, although available, has been too expensive for the countryman with his lower wages either to connect or to use. A main water supply although near at hand has not been made available to villages because of the additional water rate which would fall on owners without any return in the form of higher rents. And the social and recreational facilities introduced have been kept for the factory workers.

Despite the conflicting nature, from the balance of evidence

placed before the Committee, it seems clear that in the conditions prevailing in rural areas before the war the impact of industry on the whole did more harm than good to the countryside, whether that impact arose from the spread outwards of urban centres or the growth of new factories or buildings in the heart of the countryside. On the other hand it must be remembered that the pre-war development was uncontrolled and haphazard. If the introduction of industry into rural areas were to be properly and carefully directed, some of the former difficulties and drawbacks might be overcome, or at any rate lessened, while some of the advantages might be more fully realised.

THE COUNTRY AT WAR

THE impact of war has fallen not only on the towns and cities, the factories and offices, but has also caused great changes in the countryside, in the farms and villages.

Agriculture is once again playing a vital part in the national effort. The urgent need to increase home production of food has radically altered both the look and the outlook of the majority of country districts. Farmers have been called upon to improve their standards and methods of farming and to bring back into cultivation land which before the war had been allowed to lie idle. The fixing of agricultural prices has played a large part in providing the essential stability of conditions. At the same time County War Agricultural Executive Committees have taken over and restored to productivity thousands of acres of derelict land. The face of the countryside is being changed; it is losing its former sad and neglected appearance.

The plough, too, has come into its own. Arable, including temporary grass, produces more human food than permanent pasture. Therefore, as one of its first actions the Government launched a ploughing-up campaign. This was actually commenced before the war, when in the summer of 1939 grants were given to farmers for ploughing up permanent grassland. Since then about six million acres have already been added to the pre-war arable area. Freshly turned brown earth is now a common sight in many districts where in the decade before the war acres of grassland never saw the plough, year in, year out.

Increased arable has been needed not only to grow more human food-stuffs, but also to produce animal feeding-stuffs

which can no longer be imported from abroad. In consequence there has been a return to traditional systems of mixed farming in many districts which before the war had more and more been turning over to specialised production dependent on imported feeding-stuffs. The specialised units have been obliged to rely on their own land to supply their needs and as a result a more balanced type of farming has been adopted.

At the same time under the supervision of the County War Agricultural Executive Committees the countryside is taking on an air of activity. Apart from large drainage and reclamation works, hedges are being trimmed; ditches cleared; urgent drainage work carried out; buildings, gates, fences and roads repaired. From an atmosphere of neglect the countryside has assumed an air of busy thriving prosperity; it has put aside the bedraggled condition which in many parts cloaked its beauty and the landscape has largely resumed its former well-kept appearance.

A national minimum wage has been introduced for men working in agriculture. From the earlier figure of 48s. a week fixed in 1940 it has now been raised to 60s. a week and the former disparity between the agricultural and the industrial wage has to a considerable extent been removed. A vast increase in mechanisation has taken place both to assist in increasing production and to ease the difficulties which have arisen from the loss of men to the Armed Forces and to other industries. Agricultural labour has been supplemented by the Women's Land Army. This force, which has been largely recruited in the towns, tends to show that many townswomen, especially when confronted with a choice between factory and farm, have a preference for country life and are able to adapt themselves to country conditions. At the same time the needs of agriculture have again instilled life into many of the rural trades. Blacksmiths are busily engaged on the repair of agricultural implements; wheelwrights are undertaking the maintenance of farm implements and vehicles and village garage mechanics the new machines; carpenters are hard at work putting in order buildings, gates and fences which had been allowed to fall into disrepair, saddlers have again more work than they can easily undertake. The war has, indeed, emphasized the shortage both of those skilled in many rural trades and in the actual number of establishments where work can be carried out.

The conditions under which rural workers live have not, however, greatly changed. With the great scarcity of labour and materials resulting from the war it has not been possible to build new cottages or to recondition old ones. Electricity and gas supplies cannot be extended except where the need is imperative—usually to supply a munition works or a defence unit. Indeed, in some ways, conditions have grown more difficult. Accommodation in rural areas has been urgently needed for many other purposes. The service Departments have required it for billeting soldiers and airmen; industrial workers have sometimes had to be accommodated where a factory has been set up in the countryside; room has had to be found also for mothers and children evacuated from the towns and cities.

The evacuation of large sections of the population from the towns has provided a striking demonstration of the difference in outlook between town and country. Many townspeople who had before hardly left the cities have, for the first time, been brought into close contact with the countryside. Exact evidence of their reactions is scanty, but it seems clear that many, probably the majority, of the adults have found it difficult to adjust themselves to country ways. Country life has seemed dull. They have missed the crowds, the activity and the amenities of city life. The irrepressible flow back to the towns when danger seemed past is some indication of this reaction, although it has probably been due in part to a simple desire to return home and rejoin their menfolk and, in part, where a country home has been shared, to the inevitable clash of personalities. On the other hand the children seem often to have taken to country life, and to have shown a growing interest in country things. This is one of the really good effects of evacuation.

One development which has arisen out of the war and which is of particular interest is the setting up by the Board of Trade of the Factory and Storage Control. This body completely controls all factory and storage space in the country. Its consent must in general be obtained before premises are used for a particular purpose; before any premises are extended; before any change in use is permitted, and before a new building is erected. In exercising this control its aim is, of course, to increase war production as much as possible. It is bound to take into consideration all problems such as labour, supply, transport, power,

accommodation, which are linked up with factory and storage matters. It is thus building up a considerable and important body of knowledge and experience in the working of an administrative machine for any post-war regulation of industrial location.

The war has brought in its wake many problems and upsets needing temporary adjustments. If, on the whole, the countryside has prospered from the purely material point of view, the leisurely pace of country life has been rudely disturbed. If country life for some has been made less comfortable, broadly speaking it does seem true to say that the results of the war so far have been for the moment to tip back to a more even balance the scales formerly so heavily weighted in favour of the towns.

PLANNING

The story of the 1932 Act is one of high hopes and subsequent disappointments. Many of the powers necessary to put into operation the intentions expressed on behalf of the Government were whittled away as the Bill proceeded through Parliament, and as the Act eventually emerged it fell far short of the hopes that had been raised by its first form. It had been the intention to extend planning powers to all land urban and rural: but though the Act was called a Town and Country Planning Act, practical experience quickly proved that it was entirely inadequate for country planning schemes as such. It was discovered that the Act regarded the countryside as a mere appanage of the town, an appanage with scenic values for the townsman, which should as far as practicable be protected as the towns naturally and inevitably spread out into it. Agriculture was ignored—or only mentioned in order to exclude it. Agricultural values had no recognition at all. The whole essence of the Act is that it is an Act controlling development, and "development" under it means building and similar works, and not agricultural development: indeed the exclusion of agriculture goes so far that even agricultural buildings are exempted from planning control.

With the passing of the Restriction of Ribbon Development Act of 1935, and as a result of the complications of procedure which that involved, it is not unusual now to find planning schemes which contain no road proposals whatever—a curious situation, since roads, as part of the system of

communications on which all development is based, are basic to planning.

The Restriction of Ribbon Development Act has two main purposes. It was primarily intended to check the expansion of ribbon building along main traffic roads ("classified roads") and to control new points of access made to those roads. Secondly, it was intended to safeguard the routes of future roads and to establish "standard widths" for various types of road. All these things could be done under planning schemes with no greater difficulties than have been experienced in attempting them under this Act; and what the Act has chiefly achieved is to introduce another Government Department into the field of planning to the confusion of the general public and of the planning authorities themselves.

The Act has, broadly speaking, failed to restrict ribbon development. What it has done has been in some cases to increase the widths of the ribbons through the introduction of service roads between the main roads and the houses which line them, and in other cases to cause the ribbon of houses to turn its back, often a very untidy back, to the traffic road. The service roads have served a useful functional purpose as regards traffic: they have very much reduced the frequency of points of access to the main road and the interference to through traffic caused by standing vehicles. But the mere widening of the ribbon has done little or nothing to overcome the aesthetic and social objections inherent in that form of development. Ribbon development has not been restricted; it has only been regulated.

THE FUTURE

The Committee has assumed that the policy of the Government from the Terms of Reference includes:

(*a*) establishment of a Central Planning Authority;
(*b*) encouragement of industry and commerce;
(*c*) *maintenance of a prosperous agriculture*;
(*d*) resuscitation of village and country life;
(*e*) preservation of amenities.

PLANNING OF THE GOVERNMENT

A — CENTRAL

The Committee visualises the governmental machinery for the formulation and execution of national planning as consisting of four parts:

(*a*) A standing Committee of the Ministers concerned, under the chairmanship of a non-departmental Minister of Cabinet rank.
(*b*) Government Departments concerned with development.
(*c*) A Central Planning Commission.
(*d*) Such *ad hoc* bodies as may be needed to carry out functions not already covered by existing Ministries or other authorities or bodies.

The non-departmental Minister, who in this capacity will be the "Minister of National Planning" or the "Minister of National Organisation," should be a Minister of Cabinet rank free from departmental responsibilities. The execution of national planning will involve the use of land, and it is essential that the Minister should be in the position of a neutral and not himself the head of a department of State which is or may be itself concerned with the use and development of land. The Minister should be assisted by a small expert staff.

The Central Planning Commission should consist of a full-time independent paid chairman, who should be given what the Committee ventures to call ministerial status, *i.e.*, a right of direct access to Ministers, and equality of status with them in certain respects, and a number of part-time or full-time commissioners, chosen on the basis of their special qualifications and knowledge as individuals of proved ability in their own spheres. The staff of the Commission should consist of Civil Service personnel, chosen as far as possible with a knowledge of the internal organisation of the several Departments with which the Commission will be in contact, and other persons, including some specialists, chosen for their knowledge of particular subjects and the prosecution of research.

Outside London the Commission should be represented by Local Officers, who should as far as possible settle all matters of local importance without, however, denying the right of access to the Commission itself.

The duties of the Commission should include, *inter alia* :

(*a*) unified research and enquiry—the collection and correlation of information and the direction of research in connection therewith;
(*b*) the formulation of national planning principles in accordance with directions received from the Minister

in his capacity as Chairman of the Committee of Ministers, and the translation of national policy into concrete terms of national planning;

(*c*) the consideration of directions received from Departmental Ministers and the reporting thereon;

(*d*) the formulation and communication of general principles for the guidance of local planning authorities and the initiation, either direct or through the local officers, of schemes of national importance;

(*e*) the approval or disapproval of plans submitted by local planning authorities and decisions thereon in accordance with Government policy.

Much of the work of the Commission will thus be advisory: it will advise the Minister on matters affecting the formulation of national planning policy, and it will advise Government Departments, statutory undertakings, local authorities, and, where necessary, individuals, concerned with the use of land or its development. There should be a statutory obligation on all departmental ministries to afford all requisite information to the Commission, and to consult with it and to consider its advice.

B — Local

For the success of national planning, it is essential to maintain local initiative and enterprise and subject to the general guidance to be afforded by the directions of the Commission by which national policy will be interpreted, local authorities will continue to exercise their functions as planning authorities. They will, however, no longer be acting without guidance when initiating schemes; and it will no longer be possible for individual local authorities to refuse to co-operate in planning schemes. Reviewing the work which has been carried out under the Town and Country Planning Acts, the fundamental changes which are needed include the following:

(*a*) local planning must be compulsory and not permissive, so that the whole country may be covered and all development come under review;

(*b*) normally the primary local planning unit should be the county, or the county borough and its surrounding area, or a combination of local government units comparable in area, resources or importance with a county. In any case the local planning authority should

be the same authority or combination of authorities as executes the principal local government functions involving the use of land. Within this framework the extremely important functions will devolve on the smaller local authorities of affording the county planning authorities the benefit of their local knowledge in the formulation of plans, and the county authorities must consult the district councils accordingly; whilst in due course the responsibility for the execution of works within the approved scheme may fall on the district councils;

(*c*) local planning authorities must employ qualified personnel;

(*d*) consultation between neighbouring planning authorities must be compulsory;

(*e*) local planning authorities should be freed from the restrictions in the zoning of agricultural land due to liability for compensation under which they have laboured in the past;

(*f*) where local planning authorities are carrying out their assigned part in a national plan, the expense should not fall on their own local financial resources, but, with this exception, planning control and development should normally be initiated and carried out by the authority or authorities liable to bear the expenditure;

(*g*) when approved a local planning scheme should be a complete code of enactments affecting both the development of the land and the functions of the statutory authorities within the area of the scheme.

C — Regional

Just as it will be the function of the Commission itself to preserve a balance between the needs of town and country, and so to plan the whole country that the optimum use is found for every type of land, so there is a similar need in the different parts of England and Wales, and in this regard we see the advantages of a regional organisation. Apart from the Civil Defence Regions now used for a variety of purposes there is in fact such an organisation in being for many of the older Ministries. The Committee considers that great advantages would accrue from the use as far as possible of the same regions with the same centres for all purposes

and that local representatives of the Commission should be appointed to each such region. Such representatives should be possessed of special local knowledge and they would therefore be equally useful to both the Commission and the local authorities. Such representatives might well be assisted by local advisory committees.

The regions themselves, embracing essentially the most varied types of land and in which great urban concentrations counterbalance thinly peopled rural sections, do for the most part epitomise in miniature the essential national problems. The Commissioners themselves, or Assistant Commissioners under them, would maintain close personal contact with the regional centres, and thus secure that the national viewpoint was interpreted also in the regions.

Evidence from Wales has been considered with care. There is no doubt that some special considerations apply to Wales, not wholly limited to the difference in language and cultural background, but the Committee does not think that it would be to the advantage of Wales to have a national organisation for planning wholly separate from that of England. Between Wales and the bordering English counties there exists a close connection in many directions and activities. In the south these ties will be strengthened when the new road tunnel under the Severn, an urgently needed improvement, is an accomplished fact. Similarly, in the north, no good regional planning could ignore the ties which already exist between North Wales and the neighbouring English counties of Cheshire and Lancashire, where there is a reciprocal appreciation of the special characteristics of contrasted areas—where for example the people of Liverpool look to the mountains of North Wales for bodily and mental refreshment, as the inhabitants of North Wales look to the University of Liverpool as well as to their own University Colleges for their educational and intellectual contacts. Economically, there are equally close ties between such neighbouring counties as for example Montgomery and Shropshire or Brecon and Hereford.

For these and other reasons Wales should form with England one integral whole for planning purposes. None the less Wales has its special problems, of which account should be taken in two ways. First, there should be a Welsh Department of the Commission specially concerned with watching over Welsh matters and presided over by a Welsh Commissioner. Secondly, the regional organisation of the

Commission should be carefully adapted to meet and satisfy Welsh needs.

THE STAGES

The Committee recommends that within the FIRST YEAR:

A. (i) the system of land classification for planning purposes be agreed;

(ii) the standard procedure for co-operation between the appropriate town-planning officers and officers representing agricultural and rural interests be laid down;

(iii) the panels of architects and planners be set up;

(iv) the comprehensive investigation of electricity, gas, and water supplies be completed;

(v) the demarcation of National Parks and nature reserves be completed and the National Parks Authority be set up.

The order of priority of constructional development will have to be determined by the urgency of the various needs at the time and the availability of men and materials. It is clear that the five-year plan drawn up by the Central Planning Authority will have to embrace all those phases of national life which involve the use of land and will have, for example, to include a very extensive urban building and housing programme. This Committee is concerned only with the parts of such a comprehensive plan as affect the countryside in contradistinction to the town. As an essential factor to promote stability over the initial and difficult period of reconstruction, the Committee considers that the Government should lay down a definite agricultural and food policy for at least five years, using the experience gained both by the Ministry of Agriculture and the Ministry of Food and the increasing knowledge of the nutritional needs of the people having regard to the national health. Given this, the Committee recommends completion within the five years of:

B. (i) town and country planning schemes to cover the whole country so that there will be thereby a full indication of the areas where industrial zones are or are to be established and satellite towns or new settlements to be located;

(ii) a definite number of houses for rural workers, the number to be decided by taking stock of the position at the time;

(iii) a full survey of all villages and hamlets to determine

the existing facilities for village social centres (including playing fields), and the drawing up of a plan for the provision where suitable of centres of the village college type and the opening in all counties of a long-term building programme accordingly;

(iv) programmes for electricity, water and gas, to be based on the survey to be made in the first year;

(v) the National Park scheme with hostels, etc., in working order;

(vi) the determination and signposting of all footpaths and bridlepaths;

(vii) rules (if any) for the control of access to the country-side, the use of commons and of highways and other rights of way;

(viii) the elimination of unsightly advertisements, petrol stations, etc.;

(ix) the registration of title.

During the whole period the educational campaign should be carried on continuously.

In this report, Scotland is outside terms of reference. Whatever degree of autonomy Scotland may have within the scheme, a national plan must make provision for the whole of Britain. The great problems of Scotland, such as the future of the Highlands, are enormous problems which ought to be faced by a united nation. Scotland lies wholly outside Britain's central belt of growing industry and population and seems likely to suffer continued depopulation and migration of industry if the planning for Scotland is carried on independently.

The Committee is fully conscious of the fact that the prosperity of this country has been built up, in large measure, by the development of manufacturing industries and export trade, and is convinced that industry must be afforded every facility to re-establish itself after the war. In the past, the rapid growth of industry has often led to the creation of towns which are far from satisfactory, but numerous examples can be found of the successful results of industrialists in securing the provision of good conditions for their work-people. The Committee has been greatly impressed by evidence of the willingness of industrialists to co-operate in the work of national planning. It has been made clear that a rapid unregulated growth in unsuitable areas may have been harmful to industry itself and, in framing recommenda-

tions, the supreme importance of industrial efficiency has been kept in mind.

But post-war rehabilitation of industry need not be incompatible with the maintenance of the countryside and the Committee considers that both aims will be best achieved by measures designed to encourage the growth of industry in those areas where the greatest balance of advantage will result both to the prosperity of industry and to the nation as a whole.

INDUSTRY IN COUNTRY AREAS

INDUSTRY and commerce are the keynotes to urban concentrations. The concentration of industry and industrial populations in congested urban areas formed the subject of the Barlow Commission's investigation. They came to the conclusion that such concentrations are socially undesirable and recommended the decentralisation or dispersal of both industry and the industrial population from such centres. They deplored the leapfrog movement by which belt after belt of industrial buildings and housing is added to the city which thus sprawls outwards over the surrounding countryside. While the Barlow Commission suggested that the best method of achieving dispersal should be studied by the Central Authority, which they recommended should be set up, the Scott Committee understands that their chief concern was to check the concentration of population in the South Midlands and the South East—particularly London—and if possible, redirect industry into industrial areas in the North and in South Wales.

To implement the Barlow Commission's recommendations does not therefore necessarily mean industry coming into country areas. But it would make the coming of industry into country areas more likely. Whether widespread dispersal of industry into the countryside does in fact come about or not, the Scott Committee has reached the conclusion that the continuation of *unregulated* constructional development following pre-war trends cannot be consistent with the maintenance of agriculture, the well-being of rival communities or the preservation of the beauty of the countryside, or indeed with the well-being of the nation as a whole. Manufacturing industry and commerce are of the greatest importance to this country, and our prosperity has been built up in large measure by their development. The proper planning and

regulation of industrial location, for example by the method of local zoning which has already become an integral part of existing town and country planning, would be beneficial to industrialists and should, if properly carried out, assist them in the great task of rehabilitating industry and commerce after the war.

The Committee's conclusions are that:

(*a*) the locations of the extractive and many heavy industries are determined by immutable physical conditions which may sometimes necessitate their coming to country areas and that planning should be directed towards details of site, buildings and disposal of waste;

(*b*) though many light industries are theoretically "mobile" they are in practice tied to a limited choice of localities; where they are brought into rural areas they should be located in existing or new small towns rather than in villages or the open countryside;

(*c*) rural trades and crafts or hand manufactures should on the other hand be located in villages and should be encouraged.

There remains the question, however, whether industry should be encouraged to assist in the establishment of new towns in what is at present the open country. Apart from the actual capital invested the nation has a moral obligation towards existing towns, for example, in parts of the north where there are vacant or derelict industrial sites and an urban population, used to factory life, partially unemployed. By the creation of trading estates or by the clearing of suitable sites and in other ways, industry should be encouraged to go to these existing industrialised areas. It would be wasteful and against the national interest if such industries should be encouraged to go into country areas before urban sites which should be developed have been taken up.

There may still be industries which desire new sites and either prefer country areas or a new town.

The possible harmful effects of larger scale developments include:

(i) Loss of productive agricultural land.

(ii) Dislocation of farming and break-up of farm units.

(iii) Harmful effects on agricultural production by noxious fumes and poisonous effluents.

(iv) Attraction of labour, especially the younger workers, away from agriculture.

(v) Social disturbance through contact between rural and urban mentalities.

(vi) Spoilation of the beauty of the countryside by bad siting and bad design of buildings.

These effects resulted mainly from the congregation of industry on the outskirts of big cities. They are obviously likely to be magnified if industry is dispersed into the heart of country areas, and particularly if it were sited in villages or in the open countryside. A few of these effects, as for instance the attraction away of labour and social disturbances, may be neutralised or mitigated if the steps recommended elsewhere are carried out.

On the other hand, other witnesses have urged the advantages of the establishment of industrial units in villages or the open countryside and suggest that such would help considerably in the revival of rural life and would therefore be in the national interest.

Their reasons for so thinking may be summarised as follows:

(i) Suitable industries would revive country life and bring town and country closer together.

(ii) Suitable industries would provide employment for the wives and daughters of rural workers.

(iii) Suitable industries would provide alternative avenues of future employment for young boys and girls.

(iv) Suitable industries would provide seasonal work for agricultural workers in winter.

(v) Factories would bring in their wake an improvement in the physical and social standards of country areas, *e.g.*, electricity, gas, water supply, educational and recreational facilities, etc.

By "suitable" industries most of those who expressed this view have meant those industries closely connected with agriculture, or forestry, or those relying particularly on female or juvenile labour, as, for instance, canning, jam making, agricultural implement manufacture, fertiliser production, furniture making, glove making or hosiery.

On the other hand there are industries where noxious fumes and poisonous effluents are difficult to eliminate entirely and which are therefore capable of doing widespread harm to agriculture and the countryside. The Committee considers that their location should be subject to most stringent control.

The Committee has carefully considered the advantages which it is claimed the introduction of these industrial units into villages or the open countryside would bring. They believe that the maintenance of agriculture, together with the steps recommended already, will in themselves have the effect of reviving country life and bringing about an improvement in the physical and social standards of country areas.

The provision of alternative occupations for women and young people would be of advantage, but certain dangers might be involved, as for instance, the attraction away from agriculture of the younger generation and the causing of discontent, at least amongst their menfolk, by attracting married women from their households for full-time paid employment. If industrial units were sited in existing or new small towns in country areas, they would rely less on labour from purely agricultural communities, and for those in the villages who so desired it would be possible to take up employment in the nearby town factories without living away from home.

Summarizing: industry should be encouraged first to make use of vacant or derelict sites in towns: and where industries are brought into country areas they should be located in existing or new small towns and not in villages or the open country.

On balance the introduction of carefully regulated industry in this way would be beneficial to the countryside.

These are the main conclusions—it remains to consider some of the details.

Industry varies greatly in character and different types may be classified in many different ways. This classification is closely related to the problem of location:

(1) Extractive Industries and certain industries based thereon.
(2) Immobile or Rooted Industries.
(3) Linked Industries.
(4) Mobile Industries.
(5) Public Utility Undertakings.
(6) Rural Trades and Crafts.

Extractive Industries comprise all the mining and quarrying industries. Obviously, these industries must be located where the rock or mineral is found, and it would seem at first sight that their location is fixed by the geological structure of the country. It is self-evident that a coal mine must be located

where coal occurs. It is important to distinguish, however, between those cases where it is the ultimate intention to remove all or as much as possible of the mineral substance and those cases where the mineral occurs in such abundance that only a small part of the resources will, even eventually, be used. In the first group come coal, iron ore (at least iron ore above a minimum metal content) and other metalliferous ores generally. Into the second group come building stones, road metal, limestone or chalk for cement and lime, clay for bricks and tiles, sand and gravel for building.

It is clearly in the national interest that coalfields should be effectively worked: it is in the local interest to secure that the actual workings do the minimum damage to the features of the district and to this extent the local planning authority should exercise control over details of site and appearance of works. Extractive industries, almost more than any others, are harmful to agriculture and destructive of the beauty of the countryside: their coming into the countryside cannot be avoided in the national interest and therefore care must be taken to minimise their destructive effects. The most serious cases arise with quarries or extensive open-cast workings such as those for iron ore.

In the case of the second group, where deposits suitable for working are geographically widespread, areas which may be worked should be determined as far as possible nationally and, with the guidance of expert geological advice and in consultation with the industries concerned, should be incorporated in local planning schemes. In this way an adequate utilisation of the country's mineral resources will be assured whilst the spoliation of the countryside by the casual opening up of quarries will be prevented.

In the past the principal persons who have derived benefit from the working of land for the extraction of minerals have been the landowners to whom royalty rents and compensation have been paid and the mining companies. In the case of land already taken over by mining companies where compensation has been or is to be paid to the landowner, it would clearly be wrong to place the whole financial burden of restoration on the mining company. Some appropriate apportionment of the cost will have to be made. In future, however, where land is leased or bought for the purpose of extracting minerals, the Committee thinks that it is right

that the primary responsibility for restoring the surface should be placed on those working the minerals, leaving it to them to make suitable financial arrangements with the landowners or other persons concerned.

By the very nature of their occurrence those minerals regarded as economically important by man and occurring in limited quantities in due course become "worked out" and a once prosperous mining area tends to become derelict. This may be seen in many of the old metalliferous mining areas in Britain—in the old lead mining regions of the Pennines and in some of the tin areas of Cornwall—and the same stage has almost been reached in some of the coal mining areas of Britain. In many such cases old spoil dumps and tip heaps have become partly or wholly overgrown; in other cases there are simply wide areas of desolation. Experiments in the Midlands, Lancashire and Wales have shown that by afforestation and the planting of suitable shrubs and other plants some of the most unsightly areas can be made some of the most attractive. Some can be made economically productive of timber or even restored to agriculture. The Committee recommends that the Central Planning Authority take steps to make a special investigation of derelict or decaying mining areas with a view to their more productive utilisation.

Immobile or Rooted Industries are, for the most part, the "heavy" industries—iron and steel, shipbuilding, etc., but there are other industries which for one reason or another are relatively immobile.

Other industries must essentially be located near tidal water if they depend on imported raw materials of which inland transport costs are high—an example is oil refining. A similar situation is obviously essential for shipbuilding and is scarcely less important in the case of heavy industries serving the export market or distributing their products coastwise. Cement comes often into this category.

Still other industries have become rooted because of their long association with certain areas and their intricate organisation in large or interconnected units. In general, the cotton and woollen industries belong to this group.

It is also to be noted that the heavy industries, and most immobile industries, are organised in large units. In general, they are not likely to be scattered over the countryside: where they do come into the country areas they will inevitably

give rise to new industrial areas of considerable size whether measured in population or area.

The growth of Billingham (heavy chemicals) in the last twenty-five years is an illustration.

It seems probable that a limited number of war-time factories, not only those devoted to heavy industries, but also others now widely scattered in rural areas, will become the nuclei of new industrial areas: all such factories should be considered from the above point of view and those which are unsuitably situated relative to national interest as a whole eliminated after the war. The question of the disposal of these factories should not be left solely to the Service and Production Departments, who are at present responsible for them under war conditions. The Committee recommends, therefore, that the Central Planning Authority should, in conjunction with the other Departments primarily concerned, examine each case on its merits and decide what action would be appropriate in the particular circumstances of that factory. In general, unless the site is suitable for the development of a small town or trading estate, the factory should not be continued in production, but should be pulled down and the land rendered available for other purposes. The review should begin as soon as possible, so that there may be no undue delay after the war, when immediate decision will be needed.

Linked Industries include many industries which, considered by themselves, cannot be described either as "heavy" or as "rooted" industries but which, because they serve the needs of other industries by supplying one or more component parts in a complex manufacturing sequence, are intimately "linked" with a parent industry. Drop forging in the Birmingham area is an example; indeed, the varied metal industries of the area are to a large degree intimately linked in more than one direction. The manufacture of cardboard boxes, or metal containers, is often carried out by small, separate factories, but rarely at any distance from the manufacture of the goods which are to be packed.

The Committee has come to the conclusion that industries falling within this group must and should remain in the urban concentrations or trading estates, and the question of their wide dispersal into country areas arises only to a limited extent.

Mobile Industries are those many light industries which

can be located in a wide variety of sites and districts. Some examples are boots and shoes, hosiery, clothing, cosmetics, plastics, furniture, wireless parts, scientific instruments, razor blades and sugar confectionery.

There is a marked tendency for such industries to be established in or near the outskirts of big population centres. This was one of the main causes of the growth of London, Birmingham and other main centres of the South Midlands and South of England in the decades preceding the war.

Economically, many industries of this type could be sited in country areas without impairing their industrial efficiency. There are some already closely linked with the countryside by reason of their raw material. This is true of fruit and vegetable canning, jam making, beet-sugar making, flax processing and woodworking. At first sight it might seem that these industries would automatically seek rural locations, but such is not the case; it may be regarded as preferable to bring the raw material to the town where labour is available. Some jam manufacturers for example prefer to be actually in London where they can secure overseas supplies (often of pulp) or take advantage of market gluts. Pickle and sauce manufacturers afford another example—here a location at a great export port is an added advantage.

In the event either of spontaneous or planned dispersal of industry from congested urban centres, it would be this class of industry which would be predominantly concerned.

Public Utility Undertakings: electricity, gas and water supply present rather a different problem. Their showrooms or retail distribution shops come into the same category as other shops serving the needs of rural inhabitants and as such should be sited in small towns. Their production and storage units—the generating stations, gas works and holders and water reservoirs—fall, however, into quite a different category. Sometimes it is necessary for production and storage units to be sited in the open countryside or in villages, as for instance is the case where water reservoirs must be sited close to gathering grounds or when electrical generating stations are using water for their source of power. On other occasions it is advantageous to them that they should be sited in villages or in the open countryside in order to take advantage of the economies available through being adjacent to their raw material, as for instance electrical generating or gas plants using coal being sited at the pit

head. In such cases it may at times be in the national interest for them to be so located even though they cause harm to agriculture or spoil the beauty of the surrounding countryside.

Not a few reservoirs with associated afforestation and other features are now numbered amongst the nation's "beauty-spots"—Lake Vyrnwy is an example. Even some electrical generating stations, architecturally pleasing, are far from ruining the beauties of the countryside. What clearly is wrong is the present exemption of statutory undertakings from planning control. The Committee sees no justification for treating public utility undertakings differently from other enterprises undertaking constructional development, and attaches the greatest importance to their recommendation that all such undertakings should be subject to national planning control.

Rural Trades and Crafts include those industries, for the most part old established and run on a family or small scale basis, which serve, or are directly connected with, agriculture and forestry. Rural trades and crafts are essentially part of the old life of the villages and, if they can be made to pay, should continue to be sited in small towns and villages. In so far as they are producing hand-made articles which can be stored, they afford just those opportunities for employment over short periods at slack seasons in agriculture which factory industries do not.

For all these reasons the Committee recommends that the Women's Institutes, the Rural Industries Bureau, or other appropriate bodies, be afforded adequate resources for the further encouragement of rural crafts and that special attention be paid to the organisation of marketing.

Much can be done to restore a pride in craftsmanship by the revival or creation of guilds of craftsmen and the Committee recommends that the appropriate bodies review the whole question of apprenticeship to such crafts.

MAINTENANCE OF AGRICULTURE

From the mass of evidence received upon agriculture some of these main points emerge. Agricultural witnesses agreed that:

(1) It is essential for the Government to formulate and adopt a long-term policy for agriculture.

(2) Agricultural land must be properly farmed and main-

tained in good heart, and effective control should be exercised over landowners and farmers and a good standard of farming continually enforced.

(3) Measures should be taken to secure as far as possible stability of conditions governing farming.

(4) Agriculture requires a considerable amount of new capital to enable it to produce more economically and efficiently.

Evidence was also received that changes may well result owing to national nutritional needs.

The evidence showed that, in spite of difficulties, there has been an increase in output per man and yield per acre in farming in this country in the last few decades. By reason of the great development of mechanisation during the war, the cost of cultivation in relation to output is being substantially reduced. The large expansion of arable acreage during the war has been achieved with little if any increase in the number of persons regularly employed on farms. There appears to be hope that, taking the country as a whole, the average yield per acre of agricultural products should continue to increase—particularly if the present system of technical advice and of passing on the results of research by field demonstrations, demonstration farms and other means, to the farming community is continued and developed after the war.

Given the above conditions, the evidence indicates that there should be a further great increase in the future efficiency of the industry.

The evidence makes clear the wide variety in the types of farming which have been evolved in the different parts of England and Wales, and that these types are conditioned largely by the extremely varied physical factors in one part of this country or another. In some areas the types of farming have shown remarkable stability over long periods of years and by the very nature of the continuing influence of physical conditions must continue to change but little and then only gradually. The apparently different types of farming in England and Wales are, in fact, closely interdependent; thus a breeding area in one part of the country supplies the young stock for the maintenance of dairy herds in another and so on. The evidence justifies the conclusion that there will be a continuance of the essentially mixed and varied but inter-related character of British farming, and

that future changes will be of the nature of simplification of farm boundaries, field shapes and sizes, of gradual reorganisation according to the needs of increasing mechanisation or of improved methods of husbandry, or in response to changing demands, rather than a complete change to entirely new types of farming such as some have envisaged. A radical alteration of the types of farming is not probable and no striking change in the pattern of the open countryside is to be expected, in the opinion of the Committee.

By the phrase "the maintenance of a healthy and well-balanced agriculture" the Committee understands the continuance and revival of the traditional mixed character of British farming. This phrase was used in the statements on the policy of the Government made in Parliament by the Minister of Agriculture and Fisheries on 26th November, 1940, and by Lord Reith as the Minister of Works and Buildings, and by Mr. Greenwood as Minister without Portfolio, both speaking in relation to national planning, on 11th February, 1942.

SOME POSITIVE PROPOSALS

The Resuscitation of Village and Country Life

The drift to towns will not be stopped unless and until living conditions are on a parity in town and country. The recent increases in agricultural wages have removed to some extent a major economic inequality between town and country; the Committee confidently anticipates that the former great disparity between industrial and agricultural wages or earnings will not recur and that the country dweller will be able to pay economic rents and, indeed, to pay equally with the town-dweller for the same or comparable services, including education and health services.

The resuscitation of village life and of the countryside will not be achieved by an enforced or artificial dispersal of industry bringing to the country unwilling town-dwellers, but by so improving housing and general living conditions and so equalizing economic, social and educational opportunities in town and country that those who prefer country life will no longer find themselves and their children at a permanent disadvantage.

Rural Housing

From many sources there is evidence of the grave inadequacy of much rural housing. Housing conditions

usually associated with slums are both common and widespread in country towns, in villages and amongst scattered dwellings, and call for drastic and urgent action. Even where the conditions cannot be described as equivalent to the slums of towns, so many rural houses lack the material improvements, now becoming general in town dwellings, that the inequality is a principal factor in inducing the migration of young people to the towns.

The improvement of rural housing is an essential prerequisite to the re-establishment of a contented countryside.

New houses should be built ready-wired for electricity and appropriately constructed to receive gas and water supplies even if these services are not immediately available.

The facilities already existing (under the Housing of Rural Workers Acts) for the restoration and extension of rural dwellings, have been inadequately used in the majority of counties. Some counties, notably Devonshire, have, however, made full use of the facilities available. There is evidence that in some cases private owners have been deterred from carrying out improvements or restoring rural houses through fear of increases in assessment without the possibility of an equivalent increase in rental. The assessment position calls for consideration by the Government. The condition of all rural dwellings should be investigated by the appropriate authorities and the fullest possible efforts should be made to carry out in harmony with traditional local house design such restorations as may be needed to bring old dwellings up to modern standards.

The Committee is not primarily concerned with the planning and design of rural houses, which is a matter for the Ministry of Health in conjunction with the Ministry of Agriculture, but the question is vital and fundamental to the revivification of the countryside. The number of rural houses fit for habitation is totally inadequate and a big building programme should be undertaken after the war.

The position with regard to new rural housing is unsatisfactory in several material respects. Most frequently both council and other houses designed for towns are erected in country districts, whereas country dwellings should be specially designed with provision for greater storage space, and for the drying of clothes and the prevention of mud and muck from being brought directly into the cottage. In rural housing there are often strongly marked local traditions and

customs, which demand local differences in design—the deep porch in many windy areas, the "linny" or general purpose lean-to of east Devonshire, the local preference for a "parlour" are all examples. Rural housing should receive the careful attention of competent architects; designs for houses, including council houses, should be subject to approval for plans and elevations as well as for materials.

Good work has been done in many counties by the voluntary Advisory Panels of architects and others in promoting good design and harmony, but it is unfair to leave such important work to voluntary effort. Review by statutory Panels of paid architects and others should be set up and should be compulsory. The economies which would result from this expert advice should lower rather than increase costs. There is a wide and very important field for architects in this sphere of rural housing and the use of modern materials to harmonize with existing local and the traditional type of building calls for much study. It is especially important that supervision be exercised not only over new building but also over the additions to or restoration of existing buildings, and it should extend to execution as well as design.

Evidence has been received that there has been a tendency to apply urban standards to rural housing and that the insistence of the Ministry of Health on reduction of internal area and costs has had a serious effect on some rural housing schemes. The Committee calls attention to the evidence received and commends to the appropriate authority for study two general principles, while the Committee welcomes the action taken by the Minister of Health in appointing a Sub-Committee of the Central Housing Advisory Committee "to make recommendations as to the design, planning, lay-out, standard of construction and equipment of dwellings for the people throughout the country." The first is that the cost of sounder and more desirable building need only be some 5 to 10 per cent. above that of comparable buildings of inferior construction and that the acceptance of the lowest tender is not conducive to good building. Insufficient attention has been paid to the fact that higher initial expenditure on good housing carries with it lower maintenance costs and longer expected life of the houses, thus permitting lower rents. The second is the revision of the present dimensional limits which result in the construction of many new cottages

inadequate for their functions and with elevations which are far from pleasing. Nearly all detached or semi-detached houses are too tall in proportion to their length and depth: the appearance is bound to be unsatisfactory. If a larger ground area were allowed so as to make the building longer in proportion to its height the cubic air-space required by the byelaws would be attained without loss of beauty.

In the interior design of cottages, much thought is needed. This is particularly true of the arrangement of the kitchen or living room, and whether or not there should be a parlour as well as a kitchen-living room, the number and size of bedrooms, and the provision of bathrooms (including the possibility of using the tub and shower type now so usual in America). On the one hand there is evidence of deliberate limitation of families because of inadequate bedroom accommodation, on the other of the inadequacy of provision of smaller dwellings for the aged, widowed or unmarried. The Committee suggests the importance of consulting the representative of the Women's Institutes and other women's organisations, and considers that women should be appointed members of all Housing Committees of local authorities.

The Tied Cottage

There is much evidence on this vexed question directly contradictory in nature. The testimony of industry has been to the effect that, while the large industrial firm should concern itself with the adequacy of housing for its workers, it is better that employer and landlord should be distinct and that the employee should pay an economic rent for an adequate home from a wage at such a level that this is possible. The farm worker and his family have a better opportunity of entering into village life and of developing as self-reliant members of society if they live in or near the village in a house for which the worker pays a proper rent independently of his job. But just as in industry there must often be a caretaker or gateman living on the premises, or as a chauffeur's or gardener's flat over the garage attached to a house can be occupied only so long as the chauffeur or gardener remains in the employ of the house, so the stockman or other key employees may be needed actually at the farm, and cottages should be allocated for the purpose. The Committee is thus in favour of reducing the number of tied cottages to a minimum. Such tied cottages should be reserved

for men whose duties necessitate their living near the farm, as for example, duties connected with the management of livestock. Tied cottages should not usually, except after approval by the appropriate authority, be used for other persons. There may be occasions when shortage of cottages which are not tied may either cause hardship to a new employee by compelling him to travel unduly long distances to his work or it may result in the inability of the farmer to secure labour, with a consequent lowering of the efficiency of his farm. The Committee lay stress on the actual shortage of cottages which seems to exist in most rural areas and would suggest the building of a sufficient number of "untied" cottages as near as possible to the village or nucleated settlement. The supply of "free" cottages ought always to be kept sufficient to house at least the agricultural workers of the district.

House ownership is an advantage to all sections of the community and, with a continuance of the improved position of agricultural wages, farm workers should be encouraged to have cottages built for their own occupation; and with this end in view the subsidy provision of £10 a year for forty years of the 1938 Housing Act should be more widely known.

ELECTRICITY

The supply of electricity is an essential service which should be available in the home of practically every citizen in town and country alike, at no higher price to the consumer in the country than in the town. A century ago the Penny Post was introduced and a graded system of charges for other postal services gradually established on a national basis, so that everywhere everyone became entitled to equal postage benefits, whether in town or country. The evidence received suggests that a comparable national supply of electricity could be attained by appropriate re-organisation of the distribution side of the industry, and that parity of cost between town and country could be achieved without increasing the burden on the town. Mindful of the progressive attitude of the industry and of the excellent work of many distributing companies, marred only by the lack of resources or initiative in some of the smaller or older units, the Committee recommends that the Electricity Commissioners should be instructed to prepare a scheme for the re-organisation of electricity

supply to consumers and to make a report for the consideration of the Government. The scheme should pay attention to the following possibilities which have been brought forward in evidence:

(*a*) the standardisation of voltage throughout the country and the conversion of all D.C. to A.C. (direct current to alternating current);

(*b*) the standardisation of all fittings and regulations regarding insulation, wiring, etc.;

(*c*) the rationalisation of supply areas;

(*d*) the standardisation of charges throughout the country preferably on a flat rate per unit, with two-part tariff facilities, or graded according to consumption and/or situation;

(*e*) the provision of a supply, within a given period of years after the war, to every village of 250 inhabitants or over throughout the country, and the laying of a service line free of charge to every dwelling or other occupied building therein—the only capital charge to consumers to be that of wiring their own premises and providing their own equipment;

(*f*) the provision of a service line on request without charge to every village or hamlet of less than 250 inhabitants and every farm and industrial establishment within 100 yards of a supply cable, and the fixing of reasonable standard charges (either on a capital or rental basis) for supply lines beyond that distance.

In making this recommendation the Committee is influenced by the evidence received of the success attending comprehensive schemes for rural supply, which shows that farms are large consumers of electricity, and that such schemes, especially where gas is not available, have resulted in an actual lowering of charges to *urban* consumers whose consumption, often for lighting only, is relatively small.

Gas

Evidence submitted shows that a large proportion of consumers whilst using electricity for lighting prefer gas for heating and cooking, and the Committee considers that new houses should be so constructed as to give the tenants the option of using either gas or electricity for cooking and/or heating. Gas is, according to evidence received, essential for certain industries and its place cannot conveniently be taken by electricity; the Committee considers there should be

the closest collaboration between the gas industry and planning officers especially where the location of a new industrial plant is concerned.

The Committee views with approbation the growing improvement of gas distribution and the development of local gas grids and would welcome greater uniformity of charges and conditions of supply. The considerable extension of gas supplies to villages is possible, probable and desirable.

Water

The provision of a piped water supply is an essential in every village and on every farm and desirable in every dwelling. The provision of a piped supply to villages should not necessarily involve the linking up with a large supply system, since the application of electricity to pumping should often make available local underground supplies. At present the absence of adequate supplies from any source is a serious deterrent to efficient farming on many farms and the provision of electricity will thus perform this as well as its other useful functions.

The Water Supply Companies regard with the utmost seriousness their primary duty to the nation of maintaining the purity of their water supply. This function must come first. At the same time a diversity of existing practice indicates that several matters of vital interest could well be reviewed.

Without expressing a definite opinion, the Committee desires to place on record that evidence has been received showing that certain Water Companies, or the bodies controlling them, have used their privileged position as statutory undertakings outside planning control to take action which might have been modified to serve better the national interests. The siting of reservoirs, the compulsory acquisition of some of the finest land in the country, the prohibition of access to areas controlled, and conditions imposed as to supply to areas passed by long distance mains have all been mentioned in evidence. All water undertakings should be brought under the national planning control, whilst leaving the supervision of their development functions to the appropriate executive Ministry.

Village Institutions

In the course of the past fifty years, as seen in Chapter 5, there have been fundamental changes in village institutions. Sixty years ago, before the advent even of the bicycle, the

average village was a closely-knit social unit, living a self-contained life and having little contact, especially in winter, with the outside world. There was not infrequently a sharp cleavage between the "church folk" and the "chapel folk," but the squire or the lady of the big house and the parson were the acknowledged leaders of village life, aided, abetted, or it may be opposed (which lent variety) by the schoolmaster, the nonconformist minister, possibly the publican, and perhaps the doctor and a few leading residents.

The advent of the bicycle, still more of the motor and motor bus, broke down the sense of physical isolation. Then came the cinema in the neighbouring town, followed by the wireless in the home; and the two together broke down the sense of cultural isolation. At the same time has come the decline of squirearchy, and with it has lapsed the old-time leadership of the squire. In many villages life still centres round Church and Chapel, but because of outside contacts each has ceased to be the chief stimulus of social life as was often the case in the past.

Socially, the village has tended to become a loose and indeterminate unit with some of its members looking almost exclusively to the neighbouring town for their amusements, whilst the others suffer from the resulting decline of local institutions, thus robbed of the support of a considerable fraction, especially of the younger people. There are exceptions, where improved transport facilities have been used to bring new life to the village and where modern inventions, notably the wireless, have been adapted as they should be, to resuscitate village life.

The Committee is convinced that the cardinal problem is how to re-focus cultural life within the village itself. For the women, the Women's Institutes have shown in recent years how much can be done in this direction; more recently it has been seen that the Home Guard has provided a new common meeting ground for men. Guilds, sisterhoods, brotherhoods and rallies, associated especially with the various religious bodies, have had an important unifying function. In many villages athletic clubs, musical and dramatic societies continue to function, but often are hampered by lack of a central meeting place. The team spirit engendered by village games make for team spirit in the village as a whole.

Every village should have what, for lack of a better name, may be called a community or social centre. For a large

village or group of villages, the Cambridgeshire Village Colleges are very near the ideal. In that case they are provided by the county with the assistance of the usual grants for educational buildings, and controlled by the County Director of Education, and, in addition to the part used as a central school, they combine the functions of club, village hall, theatre, library and adult education centre, to which may be added a canteen and clinic. Such village colleges do in fact set out to provide for the needs of the people, from birth (or even before, in the ante-natal clinic) to old age, in the club and canteen (which are actually well used by old age pensioners). It is important to notice that all the powers needed by the county to provide these centres already exist throughout England and Wales. So important is their function that finance—they are eligible for grants on the same conditions as for schools—the only bar at present, should not be allowed to stand in the way of their wide adoption. The Committee accordingly recommends that steps should be taken to provide social centres of the village college type throughout the country.

The success of such village centres depends very largely on the personality of the warden in charge. Evidence presented to the Committee suggests that in the early stages a carefully trained and carefully selected leader is essential, but that, given a good start, organisation and leadership may be found in the village itself.

In smaller villages, at least a village hall with a committee room and kitchen should be provided; and there is some evidence that, whilst controlled by the village community, for economy of maintenance it might adjoin the village school, though the use of the school itself for meetings is rarely satisfactory.

The Committee considers that a properly elected parish council meeting regularly in the village hall, is a very important instrument in the maintenance of village life. The performance of certain duties should be incumbent on the council. Witnesses have been unanimous in their condemnation of the present form of election by show of hands.

It is still a fact that the village inn remains a rendezvous of the men and that village women do not normally use it. On the other hand, the Committee views with profound disapproval the growth of abuses which have come to be associated with the term "road-house," and would welcome

a greater strictness of managerial control and restriction of the granting of licences where such premises are in or near villages. The Committee have received evidence both of the disturbance caused to the life of rural communities by the late hours kept by the users of "road-houses," and of the resentment thus created in villages. Properly built and managed, a good road-house may be both an embellishment of the road and a real convenience to the passer-by.

The Preservation of Amenities

The Committee regards the countryside as a heritage, and considers that the citizens of this country are the custodians of a heritage they share with all those of British descent and that it is a duty incumbent upon the nation to take proper care of that which it thus holds in trust.

In large part the beauties of Britain are man-made. Left to themselves the fields would quickly revert to thickets of scrub and brambles interrupted by swamps and bogs choked with reeds and rushes. The British countryside to-day owes its characteristic features to the fact that it has been used—in other words it has been farmed. The countryside cannot be "preserved" (though its peculiar value to the nation can be); it must be farmed if it is to retain those features which give it distinctive charm and character. For this reason neither the farmer nor the forester can be regarded as simply members of an industry or on the same footing with those in other great industries. In addition to their function of producing food and timber from the land, farmers and foresters are unconsciously the nation's landscape gardeners, a privilege which they share with the landowners.

This principle is of fundamental importance; even were there no economic, social or strategic reasons for the maintenance of agriculture, the cheapest way, indeed the only way, of preserving the countryside in anything like its traditional aspect would still be to farm it. This principle is recognised in the management of their properties by the National Trust.

The complex pattern of the English and Welsh countryside, with its mosaic of hedged fields of varied shapes and sizes, is of comparatively recent origin—since the time when enclosure began and mainly within the last two hundred years. The pattern evolved was a utilitarian one: the resulting beauty was incidental. Only in the case of the laying

out of large parks has there been a deliberate attempt to mould the landscape. Each type of English or Welsh scenery has its devotees—there are those who find their greatest satisfaction in the waving cornlands of East Anglia or the rich dark earth and shining dykes of the Fens: others who would choose a remote Welsh valley or the fringe of Exmoor. Because of this catholicity of taste the Committee does not fear the effect of changes in the character and type of farming and agrees with the Councils for the Preservation of Rural England and Wales and kindred bodies that efforts to preserve the countryside should be directed towards the conservation on the one hand of intrinsically interesting, old and beautiful structures which may be in danger of being swept away and towards directing, on the other hand, the design of new construction so that the new will not offend by reason of bad taste or incongruity with the old.

The land of Britain should be both useful and beautiful and the two aims are in no sense incompatible.

Forestry and Arboriculture

Though the climate of this country is naturally suitable to forestry, forest and woodland to-day occupy only a little over 5 per cent. of the surface of England and Wales. From the economic point of view, there is much low grade land which would be more efficiently used in the national interest in growing a crop of trees, and the Committee considers that there should be an extension of afforestation on poor land. The Committee is aware of the criticisms that have been levelled against the Forestry Commission, particularly in regard to their policy of planting rectilinear blocks of conifers. Regarding timber as an important crop, greatly needed by the nation, there is no doubt as to the justification for this policy and of the importance of an adequate supervision of woodland, and the Committee is satisfied that, where economic conditions justify, the Commissioners are alive to the importance of native hardwoods.

The Committee recommends that the Forestry Commission be empowered to enforce the proper management of all woodland in the country. This is important to the nation from the economic point of view, and just as the preservation of the beauty of the countryside will be secured by efficient farming, so the beauty of our woodlands will be secured only by proper management. For instance, the value of good

management is already apparent in the New Forest and the Forest of Dean. In areas where amenity is a major consideration the Committee notes with pleasure the sympathetic attitude of the Forestry Commission towards planting with landscape effects in view, the development of selective felling and the growing of selected hardwoods.

In those areas suitable for afforestation but of low agricultural value, the Committee considers the establishment of foresters' part-time holdings, the erection of attractive foresters' dwellings and the opening up of forest parks, in accordance with the Commission's existing practice, will do much towards reviving the areas concerned.

Much of the beauty of the countryside is due to the clumps of trees planted by the great landowners of the eighteenth century and to the scattered timber of the parks and hedgerows, and the Committee looks for the maintenance of this tradition. The Committee deplores the failure to plant new trees much more than the removal of those which have reached a ripe age and are due to be replaced. The Committee considers that far more attention should be given in the design and lay-out of housing developments to the careful selection and planting of trees and shrubs. When new building is undertaken in the countryside, much destruction of beauty is often caused by the unnecessary removal of trees and by the replacing of the old whitethorn hedges of the fields by new fences which induce a sense of unattractive nakedness not readily hidden. This also calls for care in local planning control.

HOUSING AND PLANNING IN COUNTRY AREAS

The Rebuilding of War-damaged Cities and Towns

The population density per acre of most English and Welsh towns is low when compared with continental standards. Our cities and towns are conspicuous because of the monotonous succession of streets of mean houses, many now deteriorated into slums, which are associated with the industrial revolution. Considerable numbers of large houses, in former residential districts, are now converted into flats, thus providing accommodation for two or more families. Thousands of people residing in cities have become accustomed to living in flats. During recent years there has been a growth in the number of flats provided for the working

classes. It is possible that, at least in many places, this may continue. Construction, if along these lines, will result in an increased density of population and still make available open spaces, wider streets, play-ground areas for allotment gardens and light and air round dwellings. Should this occur, then the question of lateral spread becomes a less urgent one. The surrounding countryside will be mainly affected by the need for adequate roads leading to it.

Should the projected rebuilding contemplate the provision of separate houses with gardens, there will be the inevitable expansion of the total urban area and an overspill into the surrounding countryside. It will be the function of the planning authority to determine when the town has reached a maximum or an optimum size and should be limited by a zone of open land, where building and constructional development shall not be allowed (the so-called "green belt") (see note). It will also be the function of the authority to determine where dormitory settlements should be built. But, as soon as there is a lateral expansion of any sort, the countryside surrounding the town is directly affected.

The Committee recommends:

(i) that from the initiation of all town planning schemes involving the use of agricultural land there should be the closest collaboration with the Ministry of Agriculture and Fisheries as being the Ministry directly concerned with the utilisation of rural land;

(ii) that every town planning scheme should be agreed by the Ministry of Agriculture before approval by the Central Planning Authority and that, in the event of disagreement, the machinery suggested for the resolution of inter-departmental differences should be utilised;

(iii) that, as far as possible, tracts of good soil in the neighbourhood of towns and villages should be kept for the dual purpose of open spaces and market gardens and allotments, and that accordingly allotment holders should have a security of tenure instead of the liability of being displaced by a housing scheme.

Unless there are strong reasons for such a policy, new towns should not be sited on good agricultural land. The Committee has examined carefully the view that the gardens of a garden suburb, being intensively cultivated, provide more produce than if the whole area were farmed, but is unable to accept this view. The comparison in the case of good

land should be between the proportion of the gardens which is used in the growing of fruit and vegetables and the whole area if it were under intensive market gardening. Reliable figures of the proportion, after due allowance has been made for roads, footpaths, actual house area, garden paths, lawns, flower beds, etc., of the total area used productively are not available, but in cases examined it is not above 25 per cent., and once good agricultural land is taken for housing, it is of necessity lost to agriculture for ever, no matter how desperately it may be needed in the future for food production.

The Committee recommends:

(i) that new satellite towns, housing estates, garden cities and suburbs be sited, wherever practicable, away from the better farm land;

(ii) that, in their siting, due attention be paid to agricultural considerations;

(iii) that, as in the case of the planning of existing towns, the Ministry of Agriculture be consulted from the inception of the planning schemes.

Sporadic Building in Villages and Rural Areas

Whether or not there is to be any considerable influx of industry and industrial population into country areas there must inevitably be a good deal of new building to replace the old outworn cottages, farm houses and farm buildings which are now such common features in most districts as well as much completely new housing. It is inevitable, too, that there will be new week-end cottages for townsmen, new hostels, holiday camps, camp schools and so on; new petrol-filling stations, garages, restaurants and hotels for the traveller, and especially new houses and bungalows for the pensioner and the retired. And it is not unlikely that there will be a good deal of other building—as, for instance, of new hospitals and utilities of that kind which can function better in the country than they can in the town.

Green Belts

The term "green belt" is of comparatively recent introduction. It is a townsman's expression which embodies a townsman's point of view and has come, unfortunately, to mean a belt of open land—of commons, woods and fields—to be "preserved" from building (or, as is often said "sterilised") and so to serve as an encircling ring of green round the smoke and dirt of the town, perhaps with "wedges"

of green penetrating towards the heart of the town itself. But open land cannot be "preserved" and such a concept is false. The green belt should be a tract of ordinary country, of varying width, round a town, and a tract where the normal occupations of farming or forestry are continued so that here, as elsewhere in rural land, the farmer is the normal custodian of the land. This is the reverse of "sterilisation": it is the preservation of fertility. But in the green belt there is a difference. The townsman himself is vitally concerned in the maintenance of the open character of the land and the belt will naturally include golf courses and open common land primarily for his use. On the other hand, the farmer is compelled to recognise that the farm land is serving a dual purpose, and that there may be types of farming (*e.g.*, sheep rearing) unsuitable for such an area, where sheer propinquity brings urban minded people into rural surroundings. But in essence the green belt is just a tract of the countryside.

The farm worker and his family have far more chance of a happy social life and better opportunities of developing as self-reliant and responsible members of society if they live in a village. This is true of all dwellers in the countryside. It applies to the week-ending townsman and to those people who now go to live in ribbon developments as well as to genuine countrymen. Though not all country dwellers can live in groups, planning schemes should be so designed as to direct all new settlers into country towns and villages except where they can advance some decisive reason why they should be housed in the open countryside. Such a direction would not only benefit the settlers themselves, it would go a long way towards putting an end to that sporadic and scattered building which has done so much to spoil and suburbanise, and consequently (as many witnesses have pointed out) to affect seriously the agricultural production of large parts of the country during the last two or three decades, particularly those parts within the immediate sphere of influence of the towns. Closer building will also facilitate the provision of services.

Village Design

The country town or the village, in the English tradition at any rate, is a closely-knit group of buildings. It is well, indeed, that it should be so; that it should in its physically closely-knit character symbolise the socially co-operative

basis of the group of people which it houses. In the building of new small towns and villages, and in the re-modelling of old towns and villages which the Committee hopes will be undertaken, this close-knit character should be maintained. The country towns should be as compact as the requirements of healthy living will permit. Thus the village buildings should be situated round a green or a series of greens in a pattern which is capable of natural expansion: the community buildings, the church, the school, the institutes, the inn, occupying important positions, with the houses ranged about them.

A village plan as well as a town plan should have a carefully ordered shape: and a village as well as a town may very well have some degree of formality. To attempt to recreate in new villages the irregularity and "quaintness" which are found in so many old ones is a mistaken policy. No attempt should be made to do this. Though we may learn from our old villages many principles of design that may properly and profitably be adapted for contemporary building, our modern villages should not attempt to imitate the old but should perform their modern functions in a frankly modern way. That we have nothing in the way of spoliation to fear from the policy provided it is honestly and imaginatively carried out, is shown in architecturally formal planned villages which were built in the eighteenth century and which to-day sit as happily in the countryside as they must have done when first they were built.

All new villages and country towns should be situated away from main traffic roads, though with easy access to them, and all existing villages and country towns which have main traffic roads running through them should, as far as possible, be by-passed.

A landscape, though itself a thing of curves and masses, of rounded hills, and, even where there are no hills, of rounded trees, can absorb into its form unrounded masses and straight lines so long as these are not too vertically insistent and so long as they are well secured within the surface of the landscape and can be regarded as a development upon that surface and not an interruption of it.

An occasional strongly vertical element may sometimes, of course, by its very contrast, be highly successful, as, for instance, are the towers and spires of churches, particularly in a flat landscape. But the avoidance of vertical emphasis,

except for certain buildings, is particularly necessary in buildings erected against a sky-line. In an undulating country, it is comparatively easy to avoid building on the sky-line; buildings can, and generally should, be situated away from the sky-line ridges where they will dominate the surrounding country. But in level country it is only in the lee of a wood that the sky-line effect can be avoided, and it is particularly desirable there that a softness of outline, a horizontal emphasis, should be maintained. And of all sky-line effects to be avoided the chief is that which is created by the setting of identical blocks of houses at identical distances apart, such as occurs in much modern housing.

The Committee is convinced that the proper and realistic way of directing building operations in the countryside so as to maintain, and even increase, rather than destroy amenity, is to require that buildings shall be in good material which is sympathetic in colour with the traditional colourings of the landscape in which it is situated. Thus wood, if it is properly handled, may be very successful in almost any landscape: brick that is carefully selected for colour and texture can be inoffensively used even in a stone country: and concrete, well handled and carefully considered in the matter of colour (which unfortunately it rarely is) may also be successful in almost any district. To say this is not in the least to suggest that there has been nothing wrong in the kind of building which has been going on in the last few decades—the use of glaring red brick in stone country and so on. It has in truth been disastrous. But the future of architecture does not lie in the easy direction of mere preservation and narrow conservatism. It lies in the imaginative use of new opportunities—and it is precisely these that we are now afforded, in building, by the new materials and new methods of construction which are available to us.

PART TWO

THE UTHWATT REPORT

RECONSTRUCTION

In considering post-war reconstruction, it is perhaps natural that the replacement of buildings destroyed in the course of the war should be popularly regarded as the main objective. In many cases bombing has resulted in the destruction of isolated shops and houses or groups of buildings in areas otherwise undamaged, and for such properties straightforward rebuilding to the same lay-out may be the most satisfactory course. But where large areas have been laid waste they may well need to be replanned. This cannot be done in isolation. The replanning must form part of a long-term policy for the whole of the town or city concerned, in which the plans for the devastated areas can be co-ordinated with plans for the adjoining parts. Moreover, quite apart from any question of war damage, there are innumerable areas in many towns and cities which urgently need modernising to meet present-day requirements and the reconstruction of which is, in many cases, long overdue.

The following extract is from a paper by Mr. H. J. Manzoni (City Engineer of Birmingham) to the 1941 Conference of the Town and Country Planning Association. Dealing with the problems of large-scale redevelopment of towns and cities, the difficulties of which, he said, are very great under existing legislation, he went on:—

"Let me give you a catalogue of the contents of one such area of medium size—300 acres—taken from actual conditions:—

Nearly 11 miles of existing streets, mostly narrow and badly planned.

6,800 individual dwellings, the density varying locally up to 80 to the acre.

5,400 of these dwellings classified as slums to be condemned.

15 major industrial premises or factories, several of them comparatively recent in date.

105 minor factories, storage buildings, workshops, industrial yards, laundries, etc.

778 shops, many of them hucksters' premises.
7 schools.
18 churches and chapels.
51 licensed premises.

Many miles of public service mains, water, gas and electricity, including over a mile of 42-inch trunk water main, nearly all laid under carriageways and consequently in the wrong places for good planning. Add to these a railway viaduct, a canal, a railway viaduct, a canal, a railway goods yard and a gas works, and you have a beautiful problem in redevelopment.

"And yet this area must be rebuilt—it cannot be cleared and left derelict, it cannot be turned over completely to industry, if only because it is one of a number of more or less similar areas calling urgently for similar treatment and all adjoining and making up some ten or more square miles of the nation's source of wealth . . .

"It is possible, and indeed necessary, to introduce most of the amenities required by modern standards . . . properly planned communications, including parkways, segregation of industry and residential buildings, light, air and space, shops, schools, churches and places of amusement, parks, playing fields and licensed premises. All these can be fitted in by a careful exercise of space economy. The replanning of roads alone, in this particular instance, will yield no less than 20 acres of surplus land.

"Even when such redevelopment areas are planned we have still to link them together within the conurbation, or perhaps to separate them adequately; and here, perhaps, we may dare to think eventually in terms of open land reverting to agricultural use."*

This aspect of post-war reconstruction is only a small part of the whole picture. The requirements of agriculture, the location and re-establishment of industry for peace-time production, the de-congestion of built-up areas, the building of adequate houses, the provision of open spaces, green belts and other amenities, the development of public utility services, the overhaul of our transport and communication system, the requirements of post-war civil aviation and the relation of these matters to the demands of future defence —all these are problems to be considered when plans for the post-war period are being formulated. With the greatly

* *Replanning Britain*, Faber & Faber, 1941. Pages 98-99.

increased and speedier means of communication, all parts of the limited area of this country are rapidly reached, and now are more dependent the one upon the other. *It is, accordingly, fundamental to make use of the relatively small area available to achieve properly balanced and co-ordinated planning of the whole as compared with the confused development in the past in an isolated and regional manner.* Many of the problems lie purely in the economic sphere, but the economic and physical aspects are closely related and, in so far as the various requirements of economic reconstruction will involve the use of land, it was necessary to find a suitable basis for whatever policy may be adopted so that it may be freed from any elements which might "hamper, prejudice or delay" its effective execution.

THE UTHWATT COMMITTEE

This Committee, therefore, was appointed in January, 1941, by Lord Reith of Stonehaven, with the following terms of reference:—

"To make an objective analysis of the subject of the payment of compensation and recovery of betterment in respect of public control of the use of land;

"To advise, as a matter of urgency, what steps should be taken now or before the end of the War to prevent the work of reconstruction thereafter being prejudiced. In this connection the Committee are asked—

to consider (*a*) possible means of stabilising the value of land required for development or re-development, and (*b*) any extension or modification of powers to enable such land to be acquired by the public on an equitable basis;

to examine the merits and demerits of the methods considered;

and to advise what alterations of the existing law would be necessary to enable them to be adopted."

After considering in general outline the whole field, the Committee presented an Interim Report in accordance with that part of the terms of reference which asked them to advise, as a matter of urgency, on any immediate steps which they felt desirable to prevent the post-war reconstruction from being prejudiced. Briefly, these recommendations were:—

(1) That the Government should forthwith declare, as

a general principle, that payment of compensation in respect of the public acquisition or public control of land will not exceed sums based on the standard of "pre-war values," *i.e.*, values at 31st March, 1939; this basis to be adopted for such a period as will enable the long-term policy of planning to be determined and any alterations in the present principles governing compensation to be brought into force.

(2) That, in the legislation which it was assumed would be introduced at an early date to set up the Central Planning Authority foreshadowed, provision should be made for vesting in that Authority the power of controlling building and all other developments throughout the whole country, by reference to national planning considerations and with a view to preventing work being undertaken which might be prejudicial to reconstruction; such power to come into operation forthwith and to continue for some reasonable period after the end of hostilities while the broad lines of reconstruction are being worked out by or under the ægis of such Authority.

(3) That areas which may possibly form the subject of a reconstruction scheme, *i.e.*, which ought to be considered for redevelopment as a whole, should be defined as soon as practicable, and that from the date when the control at (2) ceases to operate over all developed areas, no works of reconstruction or development within the specified "reconstruction areas" should be permitted, except with the licence of the Central Planning Authority (or any delegate authority), for a further reasonable period after the end of hostilities, during which period detailed reconstruction schemes are being worked out and the areas to which they apply are finally determined.

The Committee's proposals regarding such areas were limited to preventing prejudicial development pending actual reconstruction. They did not make any detailed recommendations how that reconstruction should be carried out, though in paragraph 31 of the Report it was indicated that "no scheme for the replanning of these areas can be effectively carried through unless there is a power of compulsory public acquisition."

On the 17th July, 1941, Lord Reith announced in the House of Lords the Government's acceptance of the recommendations, subject to the following qualifications:—

(i) As regards the suggested "March 1939 ceiling" in relation to the compensation payable on the public acquisition or control of land "the detailed application of the principle requires consideration. Adjustments may be needed to meet particular cases, and the principle must be open to review, if circumstances arise which make its application inequitable."

(ii) As regards the prevention of prejudicial development pending reconstruction, "the Government thinks that any further safeguards necessary for the time being can be provided by strengthening the provisions of the Planning Acts, and it is proposed, in the legislation to be introduced to deal with the reconstruction areas, to make provision for this purpose."

EVOLUTION OF PLANNING

For a proper consideration of the machinery necessary to serve requirements such as those already set out it is desirable to examine the history of planning and the type of planning organisation so far established and available.

The conception of the planned use of land was first recognised in the Housing, Town Planning, etc., Act, 1909. Although limited to "land in course of development or likely to be used for building purposes," and largely negative in character, that Act nevertheless represented social progress in that it modified the existing freedom of a landowner to develop his land in whatever manner he pleased subject only to compliance with Public Health and Building Acts and bye-laws and the common law of nuisance.

Under the Act the planning authorities were the councils of boroughs and urban and rural districts. The Housing, Town Planning, etc., Act, 1919, authorised two or more such councils to set up a joint committee for the preparation of a planning scheme. The existing planning law was consolidated, with further amendments, by the Town Planning Act, 1925. By the Local Government Act, 1929, county councils were given power to take part in planning, either by joint committees or by accepting planning powers given up by district councils.

The Town and Country Planning Act, 1932, authorised the making of planning schemes for any land, built on or not, in town or country, but excluded, except to round off a scheme, built-up land unlikely to be redeveloped and land

so remote as not to need planning (*i.e.*, "static areas"). This Act is at present the governing statute.

The system provided by the 1932 Act is essentially one of local planning, based on the initiative and financial resources of local bodies. The Ministry of Health has exercised certain powers of central control, but it is clear that the powers of the Ministry were regarded by Parliament as regulatory and restrictive of the action of the local planning authorities rather than as positive and constructive. The Ministry has had no effective powers of initiative nor the power of financial assistance, and its function has been largely that of a quasi-judicial body to secure fair play to owners of property.

This system has formed a valuable measure of control over the use of land, but it has certain general defects of which the most important are:—

(i) The planning powers contained in the 1932 Act are permissive only. A comparatively small proportion of the total area of Great Britain is covered by operative planning schemes, and there are large areas of countryside and certain important towns and cities where the local planning authority has not even taken the first step of passing a resolution to prepare a planning scheme.

(ii) A planning scheme is, under the limitations of the 1932 Act, local, not national in outlook. The local authorities, responsible to local bodies of electors, naturally consider questions of planning and development largely with a view to the effect they will have on the authorities' own finances and the trade of the district. Proposals by landowners which involve the further development of an existing urban area are not likely to be refused by a local authority if the only reason against the development taking place is that from the national standpoint its proper location is elsewhere. The prevention of any such development might not only involve the authority in liability to pay heavy compensation but would, in addition, deprive it of substantial increases in income from rates.

(iii) The planning powers of local authorities under the 1932 Act are largely regulatory in character and do not, except to a limited degree, enable them to undertake or secure positive development; in effect "a planning scheme secures that, if development takes place, it shall take place only in certain ways; it does not secure that

in any particular part of the area of the scheme it will in fact take place."

The relevant statistics as at June, 1942, are as follows:—

	Total Acreage	Acreage covered by operative planning schemes	Acreage in respect of which resolutions to plan approved, but schemes not yet operative
England ..	32,209,112	1,664,862 (5%)	23,609,740 (73%)
Wales ..	5,139,103	55,187 (1%)	1,870,078 (36%)
Scotland	19,453,618	89,409 (.4%)	1,711,553 (9%)
TOTALS	56,801,833	1,809,458 (3%)	27,191,371 (48%)

It has become increasingly obvious that the planning system so far evolved, handicapped by these general defects and the absence of central positive direction, is inadequate to secure the best social use of the land of the country. Moreover, planning principles and practice have not kept pace with the economic, industrial or strategical requirements of the community. During the twenty years following the 1914-18 war certain new social problems emerged, caused largely by the migration of population from the depressed areas and the increasing concentration of industry and population in certain towns and cities. These culminated in the appointment in 1937 of the Barlow Commission.

By their terms of reference this Commission were asked;

"to inquire into the causes which have influenced the present geographical distribution of the industrial population of Great Britain and the probable direction of any change in that distribution in the future; to consider what social, economic or strategical disadvantages arise from the concentration of industries or of the industrial population in large towns or in particular areas of the country; and to report what remedial measures, if any, should be taken in the national interest."

The Commission, after a long and detailed investigation, expressed their first two conclusions as follows:—

(1) In view of the nature and urgency of the problems before the Commission, national action is necessary.

(2) For this purpose, a Central Authority, national in scope and character, is required.

They recommended the establishment by Statute of a National Authority to make research into, advise upon, and regulate the location of industry. The Commission agreed that the objectives of national action should include (*a*) the re-development of congested urban areas, (*b*) the decentralisation or dispersal of industries and industrial population from such areas, and (*c*) the encouragement of a reasonable balance of industrial development throughout the various divisions or regions of Great Britain, coupled with appropriate diversification of industry. They were of opinion that the Central Authority should consider in what areas decentralisation was desirable; and the possible methods by which it might be achieved, in view of requirements of industry, labour supply, markets, transport and power; the social and amenity needs of the communities, and strategical considerations. They also agreed that the Central Authority should have the right to inspect all existing and future Planning Schemes with a view to their modification or correlation in the national interest, and should conduct research as to the various natural resources—land, agriculture, amenities, etc.—that might be affected by industrial location. They expressed the view that municipalities should be encouraged to undertake necessary development, on a regional rather than on a municipal basis, and that financial assistance should be available from Government funds in cases of such development approved by the Central Authority.

The advance crystallised in these recommendations of the Barlow Commission marks a turning point in the evolution of planning in this country. It must be accepted from these recommendations that the character and situation of all future development, whether domestic or industrial, must ultimately be governed by such factors as the distribution of population, the problems of defence and communications and the claims of agriculture. And from this it follows that private and local initiative must be subjected to State control. This does not involve the suppression of individual initiative and enterprise, but does mean that the State must determine the areas in which they may operate.

The Uthwatt Committee's Interim Report quoted a statement made by Lord Reith on the 26th February, 1941, that in his preparatory work for post-war reconstruction of town and country he was authorised to proceed on the assumptions: "(1) That the principle of planning will be accepted as national

policy and that some central planning authority will be required; (2) that this authority will proceed on a positive policy for such matters as agriculture, industrial development and transport; (3) that some services will require treatment on a national basis, some regionally and some locally"; and the Committee stated that at an early stage in their enquiry they had become firmly convinced that a central planning authority with a positive policy for such matters as town and country planning, agriculture, industrial development and transport was essential to an effective physical reconstruction of this country after the war.

Lord Reith on the 11th February, 1942, and Lord Portal on the 21st April, 1942, intimated the Government's definite acceptance of the principle of national planning under a Central Planning Authority, and explained the Government's proposals for establishing that Authority, by the passage of the Minister of Works and Planning Act, 1942, transferring the Town and Country Planning functions formerly exercised by the Minister of Health in England and Wales to the Minister of Works and Buildings under his new title of Minister of Works and Planning. Ministers have stated that this is a first step only and far-reaching consequences must follow. Many important matters in connection with the new planning policy remain to be determined. The Committee are not concerned, for example, with the measures which may be adopted, long-term or short-term, in relation to particular objects of national planning. These must be dictated largely by economic conditions, and the recommendations are not dependent upon the adoption of any one particular solution.

THE TWO ASSUMPTIONS

There are, however, two assumptions upon the positive aspects of planning which have to be made, and upon which the Committee's recommendations are based:

(i) *The first assumption* is that national planning is intended to be a reality and a permanent feature of the administration of the internal affairs of this country. It will be directed to ensuring that the best use is made of land to secure economic efficiency for the community and well-being for the individual, and this involves the subordination to the public good of the personal interests and wishes of landowners. Unreserved acceptance of this conception of

planning is vital to a successful reconstruction policy, for every aspect of a nation's activity is ultimately dependent on land. The denser the population, the more intensive the use of land becomes in order that the limited area may be capable of furnishing the services required: the more complex the productive organisation of society, the more highly developed must be the control of land utilisation exercised by or on behalf of the community.

In analysing the difficulties of compensation and betterment the Committee begin with an appreciation of the fact that the problem arises from the existing legal position as to the use of land, which attempts to preserve, in a highly developed economy, the purely individualistic approach to land ownership. That was perhaps inevitable in the early days of industrialisation, but it is no longer completely tenable in our present stage of development and it prevents the proper and effective utilisation of our limited natural resources. Town and country planning is not an end in itself; it is the instrument by which to secure that the best use is made of the available land in the interests of the community as a whole. By nature it cannot be static. It must advance with the condition of society it is designed to serve.

(ii) This leads to *the second assumption.* While the principle of national planning has already been accepted by the Government, much remains to be done to carry it into effect, and the precise shape of the future planning policy and the degree of centralisation are as yet undetermined. The system the Committee regard as necessary for an effective reconstruction, and which is therefore assumed, is one of national planning with a high degree of initiation and control by the Central Planning Authority, which will have national as well as local considerations in mind, will base its action on organised research into the social and economic aspects of the use and development of land, and will have the backing of National financial resources where necessary for a proper execution of its policy.

DIFFICULTIES

It has become a commonplace to lament the defacement of the countryside. Much of it was perhaps inevitable. The defect was that for the most part development was allowed to proceed unplanned. The statutory powers available

were inadequate, or the financial or other difficulties of operating them were too acute to enable much effective check to be placed on sporadic development, and over a considerable area of the country no steps were taken to put into operation such powers as did exist. The number of years which had elapsed, when war broke out, since the passing of the Town Planning Act of 1932, was insufficient to enable the full effect of the Act to be appreciated. But for reasons already given the Committee are satisfied that the 1932 Act, like its predecessors, is based upon a principle of planning which is incapable of meeting present requirements.

It may be possible in time to correct, for the benefit of future generations, some of the misfortunes which have befallen the countryside. Trees can be re-planted; open spaces can in some degree be restored; even the spoliation of beauty spots is not entirely beyond human remedy. But such measures will necessarily be slow in operation. The problem of areas which in recent years have been badly developed or in which building operations would not have been permitted under adequate planning control is the same as that presented by the older built-up areas.

Two distinct problems emerge. As regards rural land it is necessary to prevent in the future a repetition of the errors of the past. As regards urban areas and other land already developed, the removal of unsatisfactory or obsolete buildings, the stopping of unsuitable uses and the provision of more suitable lay-outs where necessary are the main requirements, coupled with adequate control of any redevelopment which may take place where existing buildings are demolished or destroyed.

These two categories of land are dealt with separately. The method of treatment best suited to one branch of the problem is not necessarily the best method for the other branch. For convenience this chapter of the Committee's Report refers to built-on land as "developed" land and to land not built on as "undeveloped" land. Agriculture is a highly important form of land development, but the terms as defined are now in common use and their meaning is well understood.

One of the main objectives of national planning will be to secure the utilisation to the best national advantage of the land in the country. A balanced allocation to the necessary or desirable uses can only be made in the light of

organised research into national requirements, for the claims on the use of such land are many and competing. They include, for example:—

(i) Reservation for agriculture.

(ii) Preservation of open spaces on the fringes of towns, playing fields, coastal areas, national parks, areas of scenic beauty, etc.

(iii) Requirements of transport—roads, railways, aerodromes.

(iv) Requirements of defence.

(v) New building development—factories, shops, houses, social centres, including perhaps completely new centres of living if the principles of satellite towns and garden cities are adopted. For these purposes ancillary services are required, such as sewage disposal works, reservoirs, generating stations, schools, hospitals, civic buildings.

Under a system of well-conceived planning the allocation of land for the various requirements must proceed on the basis of selecting the most suitable land for the particular purpose, irrespective of the existing values which may attach to individual parcels of land. A coastal area, a beauty spot, the fringe land round existing towns, may all have a high building value for residential or industrial development, yet it may be in the national interest to forbid building for reasons of amenity or because the soil is highly fertile and suited for agriculture. It may be in the national interest to prevent some of our existing large cities from expanding further. This will involve sterilisation from building of much land which, if unrestricted, would continue to command a high price for development.

Action such as this is practically impossible under the existing planning legislation because of the liability placed on the local planning authority for compensating all the landowners concerned for deprivation of development value. Two well-recognised facts must be borne in mind. (1) Potential development value created by the expectation of future development is spread over many more acres than are actually required for development in the near future or are ever likely to be developed. (2) Wisely imposed planning control does not diminish the total sum of land values, but merely redistributes them, by increasing the value of some land and decreasing the value of other land. These principles of "floating value" and "shifting value" respectively are of

prime importance in connection with the amount of compensation payable, both in the imposition of restrictions on the use of land and also in respect of its acquisition. For the result is not only that compensation has, in the aggregate, to be paid far in excess of the real loss but that payment has to be made for land values that are not really destroyed at all.

FLOATING VALUE

Potential development value is by nature speculative. The hoped-for building may take place on the piece of land in question, or it may take place elsewhere; it may come within five years, or it may be twenty-five years or more before the turn of the particular piece of land to be built upon arrives. The present value at any time of the potential value of a piece of land is obtained by estimating whether and when development is likely to take place, including an estimate of the risk that other competing land may secure that turn. If we assume a town gradually spreading outwards, where the fringe land on the north, south, east and west is all equally available for development, each of the owners of such fringe land to the north, south, east and west will claim equally that the next development will "settle" on his land. Yet the average annual rate of development demand of past years may show that the demand is only enough to absorb the area of one side within such a period of the future as commands a present value.

Potential value is necessarily a "floating value," and it is impossible to predict with certainty where the "float" will settle as sites are actually required for purposes of development. When a piece of undeveloped land is compulsorily acquired, or development upon it is prohibited, the owner receives compensation for the loss of the value of a probability of the floating demand settling upon his piece of land. In practice where this process is repeated indefinitely over a large area the sum of the probabilities as estimated greatly exceeds the actual possibilities, because the "float," limited to actually occurring demands, can only settle on a proportion of the whole area. There is therefore over-valuation. To quote from the evidence submitted by one of the professional bodies in connection with the "development rights scheme" (see paragraphs 27 *et seq.* below):—

"One of the reasons for this over-valuation is that when any single piece of land is being considered, the prospect

that building development may come its way and none other must be taken into account. This 'floating value,' as it has been called, may attach to many pieces of undeveloped land on the outskirts of a town when they are considered as separate units. When considered together or 'globally' each and every unit cannot in fact secure this 'floating value' to itself, because that would assume that the demand for building land would settle upon all the units simultaneously. Such demand, however, is in fact neither 'global' nor simultaneous; it settles upon different pieces of land at different dates. Hence the 'global' method of valuation cannot assume, at the date on which the valuation is made, the possibility that demand will settle upon all the units at that date. Therefore the 'global' valuation must be less than the aggregate of the individual valuations when considered separately."

To quote further from the same source:—

> "It is obvious that no purchaser of the whole of the development rights in any complete region would pay more than the intrinsic value of such rights; and such value would be exceeded if the total possible demand were artificially increased so as to include the possibility that the 'floating value' might settle at more points, or to a greater degree, than in fact it can."

Unquestionably the greatest obstacle to really effective planning has been the fear on the part of planning authorities of incurring indefinite liabilities in the matter of compensation if the extreme step of forbidding development is taken. The almost unanimous opinion expressed in the evidence submitted is that the factor of "floating value" plays a large part in the unwillingness of authorities to incur claims for compensation. In this connection the following passage in a Report on the Preservation of the Countryside made by the Minister of Health's Town and Country Planning Advisory Committee in July, 1936, is to the point:—

> "If all building except agricultural is permanently prohibited over wide areas, compensation must be paid for the loss of potential building value over these areas. It may be that on any reasonable estimate that can be formed not more than one hundred houses are likely to be built in a 100,000-acre rural zone in the lifetime of the scheme, so that over the whole zone the loss of 'potential building value' on prohibition of any building would be only one

hundred houses. But potential building value is necessarily a 'floating value' and it is practically impossible to predict where it will settle. Hence, if the 100,000 acres are held in many ownerships, and claims by individual owners for loss of potential building value come to be separately adjudicated (as under the present system they must be), the total resulting bill for compensation is likely to be enormous, and greatly to exceed in the aggregate the amount of the real loss."

The factor of "floating value" affects the compensation payable both on the public acquisition of undeveloped land, and on the imposition of restrictions on the use of land.

SHIFTING VALUE

The public control of the use of land, operated by means of the existing planning legislation or by other means, necessarily has the effect of shifting land values: in other words, it increases the value of some land and decreases the value of other land, but it does not destroy land values. Neither the total demand for development nor its average annual rate is materially affected, if at all, by planning ordinances. If, for instance, part of the land on the fringe of a town is taken out of the market for building purposes by prohibiting development on it, the potential building value is merely shifted to other land and aggregate values are not substantially affected, if at all. Nevertheless, the loss to the owner of the land prohibited from development is obvious, and he will claim compensation for the full potential development value of his land on the ground that, but for the action of the public authority in deciding that development should not be permitted upon it, it would in fact have been used for development. The value which formerly attached to his land is transferred and becomes attached to other land whose owners enjoy a corresponding gain by reason of the increased chance that their land will be required for development at an earlier date.

A similar shift of value takes place if part of the land is taken out of the market for building purposes by being purchased for a public open space or other public purpose.

These, in outline, are the factors which, as regards undeveloped land in particular, constitute the key to the difficulties of compensation and betterment which have hampered planning. If land with potential development value

is purchased by a public authority or is restricted against development or certain forms of development, compensation has to be paid for individual loss of land values which have not in fact been destroyed but which have only shifted to other land. Where the land belongs to a number of owners, the aggregate of values claimable by individual owners when separately assessed, owing to the factor of "floating value," greatly exceeds the real loss of the claimants taken as a group. On the other hand betterment cannot be collected to any substantial degree in respect of the shifted values because it is impossible to say with certainty whether, and to what extent, a given land value is attributable to a given cause.

Some indication has already been given of the nature and magnitude of the problems which arise in connection with developed areas. Most of our towns and cities are the result of haphazard growth, unplanned and uncontrolled, and their inadequacy to twentieth century needs has long been apparent and is likely to become more acute. The fact that half the population of Great Britain lives in towns and cities of over 50,000 inhabitants shows that the necessity of ensuring that our built-up areas are healthy and efficient centres of living is one of the most important tasks with which the post-war world will be faced. The following are some of the main requirements which have to be borne in mind in framing a system upon which the replanning of cities can operate successfully:—

(1) Widening of existing roads, re-arrangement of streets, elimination of bottlenecks and building such new roads, bridges, etc., as may be necessary to provide free movement of traffic or to allow more light and air to buildings.

(2) Provision of open spaces in areas at present inadequately served. The Barlow Commission, after quoting figures for various cities, drew attention to—

> "the fact that, generally speaking, large towns at present lack reasonably adequate open space and playing fields. The present-day demand for physical fitness calls for the rectification of this deficiency, which is generally most acute in the central areas of the towns, and points to the desirability of local authorities giving consideration, when undertaking redevelopment, to the retention of part of the areas as an open space available for games."

(3) Rebuilding of bombed areas, slum areas, areas of

obsolete buildings, and overcrowded areas, to a suitable plan which may need to reduce density, change the use of land as, for example, from industrial use to housing, retail trade to offices, or make other variations, such as re-modelling the lay-out of railway communications and stations or canals.

(4) Re-housing, in other areas, of population displaced from a rebuilt district by reason of reduction in density. In this connection the necessity of providing housing close to places of work must not be overlooked.

(5) Provision of amenities and cultural facilities—libraries, schools, social centres, hospitals, cinemas, theatres, etc.

(6) Provision of industrial necessities—docks, offices, factory sites, etc.

At present a proper allocation of land for the various uses required may involve either restriction of an owner's rights of user or public acquisition of his entire interest. As shown, the effect of such an action is not to decrease the total demand for land. It will increase the competition for the available land within the area and will usually result in expansion on the perimeter or diversion of demand to other areas. Nevertheless, the compensation or purchase price payable for the land of each individual owner has to be determined by reference to its most profitable potential use. The price of land in the big towns and cities runs into very high figures. The effect is usually to make it impossible for the local authority concerned to carry out desirable improvements or impose any effective control of user with the limited resources at their command.

The hindrance to planning by reason of this compensation problem in developed areas was continually in the minds of the members of the Barlow Commission as the following quotations from their Report show:—

(i) "In the very large towns the cost of the central sites is so high as to prohibit their use for the erection of working-class houses otherwise than in blocks of flats. Even when the land is used intensively in that way, the cost of the building must be heavily subsidised from public funds if the rents are to be brought within the means of the persons for whom the new accommodation is required."

(ii) "The construction of the nuclei of the larger industrial towns in Great Britain generally proceeded without

regard to the preservation of amenity or recreation, in which they are usually sadly deficient as judged by modern standards . . . With the continued expansion of the urbanised areas, site values have soared to such a height as unfortunately to prohibit appreciable progress being made to rectify the deficiency in the central areas."

(iii) "The immense size of Greater London and the continued rapid growth both of Greater London and of surrounding urban areas over a wide radius constitute a special problem from the social point of view. The general difficulties and also the compensating advantages of concentration tend to appear emphasised to a high degree in the case of the Metropolis. It still contains a large number of unfit houses despite the extensive schemes of clearance and re-housing which have already been carried out since the war. It is burdened with some of the worst overcrowding in the country, its nearest competitor in this respect being parts of the County of Durham. The pressure of traffic upon its streets has long been a major problem. Land values in the centre attain heights unapproached in the great provincial cities, and consequently render public improvements all the more expensive."

(iv) "Large scale concentration has the effect also of forcing up land values within and around an urbanised area, and particularly in its central nucleus. This places a greater financial burden than would otherwise be necessary on industry and on local authorities, and through them on the community as a whole. Higher land values are a common feature of urban growth, but the values actually reached vary between towns of different sizes, the general tendency being that the larger the town the higher are the land values. In order to off-set the handicap of high land values in the large towns more intensive use tends to be made of the land by the erection of higher and, therefore, more expensive buildings. The result is that considerable sums have to be found from public funds, for the payment of compensation in respect both of site values and buildings when public improvements or attempts to remedy the mistakes of the past are made, and it is precisely in the large towns, where the values of land and buildings are highest, that measures of improvement or redevelopment are most needed. In his Greater London Highway Development Survey (1937) Sir Charles Bressey

said that in densely congested areas like the heart of the City of London the cost of comparatively insignificant street widenings sometimes works out at a rate exceeding £2,000,000 a mile, and even this leads to no conclusive result, as is shown by the recurrence of widenings in the same streets by successive generations."

(v) "The transport difficulties arising from London's growth are not confined to the transport of passengers on the railways. The traffic problem of the streets is not less acute. Drastic treatment alone will being relief but can be secured only at enormous cost; it has been estimated that the cost of the road schemes envisaged in Sir Charles Bressey's Report of 1937 on Greater London Highway Development would amount to between £160,000,000 and £230,000,000."

In addition to having to compensate on the basis of the value attaching to the land, acquisition in developed areas involves payment for the value of existing buildings which need to be demolished, and compensation to a trader for his removal expenses and for disturbance to his business. All these items have to be purchased before the land can be used for the purpose required in the interests of good planning.

PRINCIPLES OF COMPENSATION

Ownership of land involves duties to the community as well as rights in the individual owner. It may involve complete surrender of the land to the State or it may involve submission to a limitation of rights of user of the land without surrender of ownership or possession being required. There is a difference in principle between these two types of public interference with the rights of private ownership. Where property is taken over, the intention is to use those rights, and the common law of England does not recognise any right of requisitioning property by the State without liability to pay compensation to the individual for the loss of his property. The basis of compensation rests with the State to prescribe. In the second type of case, where the regulatory power of the State limits the use which an owner may make of his property, but does not deprive him of ownership, whatever rights he may lose are not taken over by the State; they are destroyed on the grounds that their existence is contrary to the national interest. In such circumstances no claim for compensation lies at common law.

Cases exist where this common law principle is modified by statute and provision is made for payment of compensation. The justification is usually that without such modification real hardship would be suffered by the individual whose rights are affected by the restrictions, but there is no right to compensation unless that right is either expressly or impliedly conferred by statute.

For the last hundred years owners of property have been compelled to an increasing extent, without compensation, to comply with certain requirements regarding their property, such, for example, as maintaining or improving its sanitary equipment, observing certain standards of construction, providing adequate air space around buildings and streets of sufficient width. The underlying reason for such provisions is, obviously, that compliance with certain requirements is essential to the interests of the community and that accordingly the private owner should be compelled to comply with them even at cost to himself. All these restrictions are imposed in the public interest, and the essence of the compensation problem as regards the imposition of restrictions appears to be this—at what point does the public interest become such that a private individual ought to be called on to comply, at his own cost, with a restriction or requirement designed to secure that public interest? The history of the imposition of obligations without compensation has been to push that point progressively further on and to add to the list of requirements considered to be essential to the well-being of the community. It may be remarked that the view of the Legislature on these essential requirements for the well-being of the community has passed beyond the field of health and safety to that of convenience and amenity, as witness bye-laws in regard to advertisements and petrol filling stations.

If the question be asked "Does ownership of land necessarily carry with it the right to turn it to any use which happens to be most profitable to the owner?", a negative answer must clearly be given. As we have seen, some restrictions may clearly be imposed—and would be accepted unquestionably by any landowner—without any suggestion of hardship or of giving rise to any just claim for compensation. They are both reasonable and necessary in order that other persons should not be injured in the legitimate enjoyment of their own rights. The principle is, at its lowest. that of "live and let live" and advances so as to comprehend

all the obligations which according to the social standards of the day are regarded as due to neighbours and fellow citizens. But, as the scope of these restrictions increases by the operation of planning, a stage is reached at which the restrictions imposed will be said to go beyond the claims of "good neighbourliness," and general considerations of regional or national policy require so great a restriction on the landowner's use of his land as to amount to a taking away from him of a proprietary interest in the land. When this point has been reached, the landowner will claim to be fairly entitled to compensation, and such compensation will be computed upon the principles applicable where other rights of property are taken away from him.

Thus the Committee state five propositions:—

(1) Ownership of land does not carry with it an unqualified right of user.

(2) Therefore restrictions based on the duties of neighbourliness may be imposed without involving the conception that the landowner is being deprived of any property or interest.

(3) Therefore such restrictions can be imposed without liability to pay compensation.

(4) But the point may be reached when the restrictions imposed extend beyond the obligations of neighbourliness.

(5) At this stage the restrictions become equivalent to an expropriation of a proprietary right or interest and therefore (it will be claimed) should carry a right to compensation as such.

It will always be difficult to draw the line with any satisfactory logic, *i.e.*, to determine the point at which the accepted obligations of neighbourliness or citizenship are exceeded and an expropriation is suffered—particularly as the standard of obligation will vary with the political theory of the day. Public requirements may go beyond a negative restriction and demand, in the national interest, positive use of a particular character. The assumption by the State, once and for all, of all rights over development and redevelopment would be one solution of the difficulties.

The question is whether any kind of restriction imposed in the public interest on the use of land by private owners should carry a right to compensation. Mere regulation of the use of land in the interests of the community would not, if the common law were followed out, involve any such

payment, and an owner could, therefore, be required to refrain from using his land for purposes specified by the State. Obedience to such a direction would not entitle him to compensation. To some, indeed, it would appear that the acceptance of this common law rule is inevitable if no other satisfactory solution to the difficulties can be found. But it must be recognised that the full application of such a policy would result in hardship in many cases and, moreover, would involve inconsistent treatment as between individuals. The owner whose land was zoned for agriculture might suffer a loss of potential building value for which he had paid when purchasing the land; the owner whose land was earmarked for factory development would be able to secure a high price and retain the proceeds for his own use, unless special taxation measures were brought into operation.

The extent to which the common law principle ought to be modified by statute in favour of the subject is a matter of policy upon which the decision rests with Parliament. In framing proposals, however, it has been assumed that Parliament will take the view that compensation should be paid at any rate in respect of comprehensive limitations upon the rights of private ownership.

GENERAL CONCLUSIONS

On the problem of compensation and betterment, the main conclusions drawn in the course of analysis may now be summarised as follows:—

(*a*) The present statutory provisions, which have not proved satisfactory in the sphere of local planning, would be altogether inadequate for application to the circumstances created by planning conceived as a national operation. If measures of post-war reconstruction are not to be prejudiced a method must be found for removing the difficulties and providing an efficient basis for the future.

(*b*) The existence of the compensation-betterment problem can be traced to two root causes:—

(i) The fact that land in private ownership is a marketable commodity with varying values according to location and the purposes for which it is capable of use.

(ii) The fact that land is held by a large number of owners whose individual interests lie in putting their own particular piece of land to the most profitable use

for which they can find a market, whereas the need of the State and of the community is to ensure the best use of all land of the country irrespective of financial return. If planning is a necessity and an advantage to the community, as is undoubtedly the case, a means must be found for removing the conflict between private and public interest.

(*c*) It is in the sphere of "development value," whether attaching to land already developed by building, as in urban areas, or to land suitable for development in the predictable future, as in the case of fringe land around towns and cities, that the compensation difficulty is acute. Development values as a whole are dependent on the economic factors that determine the quantum of development of various types required throughout the country. As planning does not reduce this quantum it does not destroy land values but merely redistributes them over a different area. Planning control may reduce the value of a particular piece of land, but over the country as a whole there is no loss.

(*d*) In theory, therefore, compensation and betterment should balance each other. In practice they do not. The present statutory code is limited in operation and is not designed to secure balance, and within the framework of the existing system of land ownership it is not possible to devise any scheme for making the principle of balance effective. It is only if all the land in the country were in the ownership of a single person or body that the necessity for paying compensation and collecting betterment on account of shifts in value due to planning would disappear altogether.

LAND OWNERSHIP

An analysis up to this point has led to the conclusion that for a solution to the problem a measure of unification of existing rights in land is necessary in order to overcome the effect of "shifting value" and to eliminate the conflict between private and public interest. Before examining the method by which this can best be carried into effect, it is desirable to state the ideals the Committee have tried to satisfy.

In the first place, the Committee's recommendations should provide a permanent solution. The adoption of measures

designed to serve only the needs of the immediate post-war period and which leave untouched the fundamental causes of the existing difficulties, would soon lead to a recurrence of the problem, and would only be an obstacle to long-term planning.

Second, the recommendations should not result in the taking over of property by the State without fair compensation. To some an easy solution to the problem is the imposition of complete planning control without compensation, or confiscation by the State of the rights of development or of all land in private ownership, but these, far from being a solution to the compensation-betterment problem, are only the expression of a particular political theory.

Third, the recommendations must be, so far as possible, capable of immediate adoption and be practicable and must not entail greater financial operations than are likely to be feasible during the war or in the early post-war period.

Lastly, the recommendations should not interfere unnecessarily with the economic life of the country or with individual enterprise. Planning exists for the planned, not for the planners.

UNIFICATION BY PRIVATE POOLING SCHEMES

During the last few years informed opinion has become increasingly alive to the necessity of securing some measure of unification of land ownership, and in some quarters pooling schemes of various types have been advanced as a suitable method by which the results could be secured without interfering with private ownership of the land. The essence of a pooling scheme is that the owners of the whole of the land and buildings within a specified area should be formed into a Corporation which would become sole owner of all the property in the area. The existing owners would be compelled to sell their land to the Corporation in exchange for shares representing the value of their interest. The Corporation would be managed on the same lines as a limited liability company, the shareholders would appoint directors, who would manage the land and the buildings on behalf of the Corporation as single estate owner of the area, and would fix rents and decide questions of development or redevelopment by reference to considerations of the best use of the Corporation's assets.

The pooling system would extend to land ownership and

management somewhat the same system of rationalisation and concentration which, in the industrial sphere, has resulted, during the last generation or so, in the complete reorganisation of many industries by the absorption of small scale enterprises. In some cases competition within the industry has been largely eliminated and a virtual monopoly established. Nevertheless, it is said that efficiency has been increased, research has been facilitated, improved processes for large-scale production have been made possible, and the result is claimed to have been of benefit to both shareholders and consumers alike.

The advocates of pooling systems claim that similar advantages would accrue from the adoption of their proposals, and that the competitive element would be preserved by the competition between different pools which would vie with each other to attract the most profitable development.

There are many and grave objections to these schemes. They are essentially financial ventures. Voluntary association in a financial venture is one thing; compulsory association is quite another. Landowners could justifiably object to such compulsory association. There would soon be a divorce between the persons interested in the occupation of the land held by any particular corporation and the persons interested in the shares of the corporation, and there would therefore arise a conflict of interest between the shareholders on the one hand and the occupiers of the corporation's land on the other hand. The corporation would, unless subject to effective overriding control, direct its attention to furthering the financial interests of the corporation. A statutory limitation on dividends—if it secured anything—would have one or more of these results: that rents charged were not determined by economic conditions, leading in practice to unjustifiable diversity of treatment of tenants, that the pool was overcapitalised, or that a fund was created in the hands of the corporations which was not applicable to any specific purpose. Such a limitation of profits would not secure good planning. Lastly, if pooling corporations assume the large proportions contemplated by some of their advocates, there would be created a commercial monopoly in each corporation over a wide area of land with all that such a monopoly involves.

So far as planning and the existing difficulties of compensation and betterment are concerned, the question of

the relation between the pool authorities and the planning authorities immediately arises. The functions of both would be to decide the use of particular areas of land, and their operations would need to be so closely co-ordinated that the pool would either have to take over planning functions, or become a part of the planning machinery. Yet by reason of the inherent conflict between the objects of planning and the interests of the pool, neither alternative is possible. One may further observe that questions would arise between different pools as regards such services as roads and open spaces, and that diffusion of control and administration, and not unification, is inherent in the setting up of different pools. The conflict between public and private interests remains.

Assuming, however, that a system could be devised by which the activities of the pool could be suitably controlled or reconciled with planning considerations, the difficulty still remains that the shifts of value resulting from planning restrictions or directions might extend beyond the boundaries of the pool, and questions of compensation and betterment would still have to be faced. Limitations of density, the zoning of land for agriculture, the preservation of areas as national parks or public open spaces, may well shift values from one pool area to another pool area.

The area of the pool is therefore the important factor. In general it is recognised by those advocates of pooling who have appreciated the real nature of the problem that, if pooling is to contribute in any measure to a practical solution of existing difficulties of compensation and betterment in relation to planning, the area of the pool must be sufficiently large to embrace what has been described as the "economic unit for each locality." It is implied that this would enable the shift of values resulting from proper planning to be kept within the unit so that compensation would not need to be claimed nor would there be any case for collecting betterment. Theoretically this would be the case provided only that the "economic unit for each locality" is capable of determination and so capable at the date of the formation of the pool, and that the boundaries so devised are coterminous with the land likely to be bettered by planning operations within the area. But so soon as one attempts to delineate an area for this purpose it becomes apparent that, by reason of the inter-relation of the many

spheres of social and industrial activity and the uncertainties of the future, no boundaries can be so defined. Neither economic influences nor shifts of value resulting from planning restrictions are local in operation. The only economic unit that would effectively balance the elements of loss or gain in land values arising from planning control, and would be unaffected by future changes of circumstances and policy, is necessarily the whole country; and particularly will this be so under a system of national planning for which, as the Barlow Report has shown, it may be found necessary to plan in such a way as to direct or induce industry and population to transfer from one centre to another.

The logical answer to the proposals for pooling ownerships is thus that they are theoretically sound in endeavouring by means of unification to eliminate the compensation requirements arising from shifts of value. But as shifts are on a national scale so the pooling of ownership must result in a single pool comprising the whole of the land of the country. In a word, the only feasible system of pooling is nationalisation, which is the very result pooling is designed to avoid.

UNIFICATION BY PUBLIC OWNERSHIP

Criticism of the large scale pooling schemes leads to the result that the solution of the compensation-betterment difficulty can only lie in a degree of unification of existing rights in land carried out on a national scale and involving their national ownership. If the problem provided by our terms of reference were regarded as an academic exercise without regard to administrative or other consequences, immediate transfer to public ownership of all land would present the logical solution; but the Committee have no doubt that land nationalisation is not practicable as an immediate measure and reject it on that ground alone. *First*, land nationalisation is not a policy to be embarked upon lightly, and it would arouse keen political controversy. A change of view upon the topic of land nationalisation calls for more than a rearrangement of prejudices. Delay, to say the least, would result. *Second*, it would involve financial operations which in the immediate post-war period might, as we see the matter, be entirely out of the question. *Third*, land nationalisation would involve the establishment of a complicated administrative machinery equipped to deal with the whole of the land of the country.

RECOMMENDATIONS

That conclusion makes it desirable to consider whether there is any method, short of immediate nationalisation, which will effectively solve the compensation-betterment problem of the present system and provide an adequate basis on which the post-war reconstruction will be able to proceed.

The only method which answers this test in regard to undeveloped land is the proposal made to the Barlow Commission for the acquisition by the State of the development rights in undeveloped land. This scheme, which for convenience is referred to as the "development rights scheme," does provide a solution which is both practicable and equitable. Different considerations apply in the case of developed land and it seems that piecemeal transfer of urban land to public ownership, as and when required for planning or other public purposes, would be less cumbersome and less onerous a task than that involved in immediate wholesale nationalisation.

It may be useful at this point to complete the foregoing general analysis with a broad outline of the recommendations made over the whole field.

THE COMMITTEE RECOMMEND THE IMMEDIATE VESTING IN THE STATE OF THE RIGHTS OF DEVELOPMENT IN ALL LAND LYING OUTSIDE BUILT-UP AREAS (SUBJECT TO CERTAIN EXCEPTIONS) ON PAYMENT OF FAIR COMPENSATION, SUCH VESTING TO BE SECURED BY THE IMPOSITION OF A PROHIBITION AGAINST DEVELOPMENT OTHERWISE THAN WITH THE CONSENT OF THE STATE ACCOMPANIED BY THE GRANT OF COMPULSORY POWERS OF ACQUIRING THE LAND ITSELF WHEN WANTED FOR PUBLIC PURPOSES OR APPROVED PRIVATE DEVELOPMENT.

Shortly, the scheme recommended involves four points:

(*a*) The placing of a general prohibition against development on all undeveloped land outside built-up areas and immediate payment to owners of the land affected of compensation for the loss of development value.

(*b*) Unfettered determination through planning machinery of the areas in which public or private development is to take place, the amount and type of development being determined as regards development for public purposes by national needs and, as regards private development, by private demand.

(*c*) Purchase by the State of the land itself if and

when required for approved development whether for public purposes or for private purposes.

(*d*) In the case of approved development for private purposes the leasing of such land by the State to the person or body undertaking the development.

MEASURES FOR BUILT-UP AREAS

THE COMMITTEE RECOMMEND THE CONFERMENT UPON PUBLIC AUTHORITIES OF POWERS OF PURCHASE, MUCH WIDER AND SIMPLER THAN THOSE IN OPERATION UNDER EXISTING LEGISLATION.

From the point of view of planning, the ideal is that the best plans should be prepared, unhampered by financial considerations. As matters stand the cost falls on the local authority and the plans suffer accordingly. Planning authorities should have every facility for purchasing whatever land may be required for fulfilling their schemes. Suitable financial arrangements are therefore imperative.

THE COMMITTEE RECOMMEND A SCHEME FOR THE IMPOSITION OF A PERIODIC LEVY ON INCREASES IN ANNUAL SITE VALUE, WITH THE OBJECT OF SECURING SUCH BETTERMENT FOR THE COMMUNITY AS AND WHEN IT IS REALISED, ENJOYED OR REALISABLE.

Their scheme may be shortly summarised as follows:

(*a*) Acquisition of Rights.

(i) From a date to be fixed (the "vesting date") a prohibition is to be placed on the "development," except under the Central Planning Authority, of all "undeveloped land lying outside town areas," and, as a consequence, on the vesting date the right to develop that land will be treated as having vested in the State.

(ii) The undeveloped land shorn of all rights of development will remain vested in its former owners. The interest so remaining vested in landed proprietors is referred to as the "owner's interest." Owners will retain possession and all their powers of ownership, use and disposal except only that "development" is prohibited. Mortgages, charges, etc., which affect the land will continue to affect the "owner's interest."

"Development" for the purposes of the scheme means diversion to uses other than agricultural uses and the erection of buildings (other than agricultural buildings or buildings which are to serve the amenity purposes of other buildings).

(*b*) Compensation.

Compensation will be paid on the basis that there is to be fixed a single sum representing the fair value to the State of the development rights taken as a whole. This sum will be divided among the owners in accordance with the development value of their various holdings. A Supplemental Fund to meet exceptional cases is suggested.

(*c*) Management.

(i) The Central Planning Authority, either directly or through regional or other bodies, will be charged with the management of all matters arising under the scheme.

(ii) Where lands are required for public purposes or for private development the "owner's interest" will be purchased by the Central Planning Authority under compulsory powers. The development value having been already paid, the price will be ascertained by reference to the value at the date of acquisition of the "owner's interest." If not agreed, the amount payable will be assessed by arbitration.

(iii) Where the land is required for private development, it will be leased to the developer for an appropriate term of years suggested by reference to the nature of the development. It will not be sold. Where both an owner and a third party wish to develop, preference will be given to the owner.

GENERAL EFFECT OF THE SCHEME

An understanding of the scheme as a whole will be helped by a statement in broad outline of its effect.

First. The prohibition against development or the acquisition of the development rights—however it be looked at—will not disturb the title or possession of any person interested in the land, The owner and all other persons interested in the land are in the position they would occupy if they had entered into an effective bargain that the land would not be used for "development." By the prohibition, the State acquires no right to use, manage or enter upon the land. It can interfere with its use only to the extent of stopping "development." Broadly, the prohibition is that the land may not be treated as building land or diverted to industrial purposes.

Second. The maximum amount of freedom of use and enjoyment consistent with the interest of the State in the development rights remains with the owner. He is not

restricted to the existing use of the land. The land may be used for any purpose which does not amount to "development." The owner of a farm, for instance, will remain free to farm in such a manner as he thinks fit and to make any such improvements as are in his view proper for his holding as a farm. The occupier of a house and garden or park which falls within the scheme will remain free to use his property for all the purposes of his residence, and (subject to compliance with any local bye-laws) will remain entitled to put up such additional buildings as are necessary or designed for the improvement or amenities of his house. He will be substantially in the same position as if he had agreed to keep his garden or park as a private open space. The only limitation is that the land may not be "developed" in the technical sense the Committee attribute to the term.

Third. The owner's powers of selling, mortgaging, leasing, etc., or otherwise disposing of his property remain undisturbed. But their exercise will affect only the "owner's interest."

Fourth. Any interests affecting the land (leases, mortgages, rentcharges, etc.), will continue to attach to the land shorn of the development rights.

Fifth. Any compensation paid by reason of the imposition of the prohibition will go to the persons interested in the land according to their rights and interests. Where there is a mortgage, for instance, the compensation will be treated as if it arose from a sale of part of the mortgaged property.

Sixth. Where "development" in the sense in which we use the word is proposed, the position of the State as the owner of the development rights comes into active operation. The proposal for development may range from the formation of a garden city or a satellite town to the erection of a private factory, and it may emanate from any source. Whether particular land is to be developed and the form that development should take is to be decided by the Central Planning Authority acting through its appropriate machinery.

Seventh. Whatever form of development is decided upon the Central Planning Authority should acquire the "owner's interest," compulsorily if need be. Unless the purchase price is agreed, the fair value of the "owner's interest" will have to be determined by arbitration in the ordinary way. The property is to be valued as it stands at the date of its acquisition. The development rights will already have been

paid for and are not to be paid for again. The value to be assessed will be the value of the property subject to the restriction against "development." In addition to compensation for the land taken, there will also have to be paid compensation for severance, disturbance or any other "injurious affection" suffered in respect of the owner's interest in his remaining land.

Eighth. Where private development is in question and there is competition between private developers, preference should, other things being equal, be given to the owner of the "owner's interest."

Ninth. The next step is the disposition of the land in favour of the developer. That must, where private development is in question, take the form of a lease subject to a rent or to a premium, or to both a rent and a premium, for the period of years required by the nature of the development under consideration and the status of the developer. It must contain provisions which secure that the land is developed and used in accordance with the agreed proposals and such other provisions dictated by planning and other considerations as the circumstances require. The lease should contain —what is common form in leases at the present day—a right to re-enter on breach of covenants, subject to any exercise of the powers not possessed by the Courts to relieve against forfeiture on such terms as it thinks just.

There must be covenants obliging use in accordance with the development proposed and a right of re-entry on failure to carry it out. Land should not be wasted, and, unless the development authorised is in fact carried out, the State should have the right to resume possession.

Tenth. Where a man wishes to build for his own occupation a house on land he owns, an exception to the general rule of procedure may be made. In such case the State would not acquire the "owner's interest" and lease it back to the proprietor but a licence would be granted for the erection of the house subject to appropriate conditions.

Lastly. The scheme does not require either the State or local authority to engage in industry. The State's function under the scheme is to use the powers it acquires in the interests of National Planning.

THE AREA AND PROPERTY AFFECTED BY THE SCHEME

A matter of principle to be decided in connection with the acquisition of development rights conceived as a national operation is the general area to which such a scheme should apply. There should be excluded from its operation all land whatever its condition which lies within the limits of a town in its popular sense, *i.e.*, a place where there is such an amount of continuous occupancy of the ground by buildings that persons may be said to be living in the same town or place continuously, fringe land not being regarded as part of the town. No doubt there will be many vacant sites inside towns, but the Committee can see no reason for including them within the ambit of the scheme. Indeed, all the arguments are against inclusion. Their urban character has already been determined. Their inclusion would involve centralised control where local control should be predominant. The burden of administration would be heavy: the addition to cost, enormous. If, within a town, land is required for planning purposes the land should be bought outright. There is indeed no point in buying development rights in undeveloped land within the limits of a town.

It is important that the line of demarcation between land within the scheme area and land outside the scheme area should be precise in order that any particular owner may be able readily to ascertain whether or not his land falls within the scheme area. Exact demarcation cannot be achieved solely by definition and it will be necessary to show the exact area of a "town," by reference to boundary lines drawn on maps.

It should be the function of the Central Planning Authority to determine exactly the limits of the "town areas" and to be responsible for the maps, and for this purpose they should take advantage of the knowledge and services of the appropriate local authorities. The final decision as to the limits of any particular "town area" should lie with the Central Planning Authority, who should be entitled to decide all doubtful points.

There should not be any right of appeal to the Courts from any decision as to the limits of a "town area" arrived at by the Central Planning Authority. Nor should owners of land have any right to be heard upon the question whether

their land should be included within or excluded from a "town area," for the question is not one of making a choice whether one particular piece of land rather than another should be taken for public purposes, but whether the development rights in the land should be acquired in the interests of the State. The operation is a national one undertaken for the purpose of controlling all future development in accordance with national planning, and the views of individual owners are irrelevant in determining the extent of the scheme.

The preparation of these maps is the first step in the scheme. It should be undertaken with as much expedition as circumstances admit. When settled the maps should be readily available for public inspection.

The next question is what land outside "town areas" should be excluded from the scheme.

The first exception recommended is land forming part of the site or curtilage of any dwellinghouse or other building, where the area of the site and curtilage does not exceed one acre.

It is clear that there should be an exemption as regards small pieces of land which have already been developed by the erection of a building. Interference with such lands in the interests of planning is unlikely and further development on such land, either alone or in combination with other properties, can and should be dealt with under the Town Planning Acts without any compensation being payable.

On the other hand, large blocks of land on part of which there is a dwellinghouse should be treated as possibly being the subject of further development and should therefore be treated as "undeveloped land." The difficulty is to draw the line. It might conveniently be drawn where the whole plot exceeds one acre. The exact area is not a matter of major importance. The great majority of dwellinghouses and grounds held therewith which are outside towns will fall within the one-acre limit.

So far as dwellinghouses are concerned the exception should stop there, with the result that, where the one-acre limit is exceeded, both the site and the grounds of the dwellinghouse would be treated as "undeveloped land." The cases are infinitely various and range from the mansion with its park to the dwellinghouse which with its grounds comes to slightly more than one acre. A general rule could not be laid down as to the area which might conveniently be treated

as part of a mansion or dwellinghouse and individual plotting would be impracticable. The large areas attached to many houses cannot be left outside the scheme, and, once the limit of area has been fixed, it should be adhered to. Individual cases cannot be considered.

Land used for the purposes of any trade, business or industry other than agriculture, and land used for purposes such as railways or docks should obviously be treated as being developed. But land which is not directly devoted to trade purposes (*e.g.*, a sports ground owned or leased by a commercial undertaking) should not be included in the exception.

On the other hand, common lands, together with golf courses, race courses, sports and recreation grounds, private open spaces and the like should be included within the scheme. They may be wanted for development, and the rights should therefore be acquired. The circumstance that the present owners are unlikely to develop is not any reason for treating them differently from other owners as regards compensation for loss of development value.

COMPENSATION

The Committee's recommendation is that the compensation to be paid should be assessed for the whole country as a single sum (called the General Compensation Fund) and divided among claimants in accordance with the value of the development rights attached to their lands, a Supplemental Fund being set up to meet exceptional cases.

It is outside the Committee's province to consider the amount of the Fund, and to enlarge upon the method by which the exact amount of the Fund should be ascertained. It appears, however, that the case is one in which, having regard to the considerations involved in its ascertainment, the amount should be fixed by the Government after taking expert advice. It is proposed, therefore, only to refer shortly to some specific points which bear upon the fixing of the amount.

Some conception of the amount involved may be obtained by taking the past rate of development of undeveloped land —using the phrase as meaning undeveloped land outside town areas—at 45,000 acres per annum and the average value of development rights as regards that land at £200

per acre. The resultant figure is £9,000,000. A valuer's method of arriving at a capital sum would be to multiply that sum by a figure representing an appropriate number of years' purchase. In selecting the figure he would be guided by the future prospects of the annual return being increased or decreased. In other words he would take into account all factors bearing on the prospects of development of land not yet developed.

Past dealings are a guide, but the main consideration must be future economic conditions.

It is not proposed to enter upon a discussion of the general economic outlook, but merely to draw attention to some specific points:—

(*a*) It is predicted that a decline in population will occur which may be expected to reduce future demand for housing. Against this the number of separate families is increasing and may continue to do so for some years. If economic conditions are sufficiently favourable to enable these families to satisfy their natural desire for separate dwellinghouses the demand created may, to some extent, offset the drop in demand which would normally accompany a decrease in population.

(*b*) The shortage of materials owing to the war must slow up the development of undeveloped land.

(*c*) The effect of the war on international trade, the existence of factories built for war production which may or may not be adaptable to peace-time requirements, and the concentration of industry are factors which will tend to a further decrease in the rate of development for some years.

(*d*) The natural effect of any considerable rise in building costs will be to depress site values.

It is suggested that a Supplemental Fund should be set up in order to deal with cases which require exceptional treatment. The case that has to be considered is the case where land is "dead ripe" for development. In such a case the element of "floating value" hardly enters into the valuation of the development rights affecting that land, but the value as assessed has, in the distribution of the General Compensation Fund, to rank with assessments into which "floating value" will have found a considerable place. As regards some dead ripe lands, money may indeed have been spent in connection with roads and other works.

MANAGEMENT

One of the objects to be secured by National Planning is that where land is required for a public purpose or for private development, suitable land should be made available for that purpose. Another object to be secured is that, if land is disposed of for private development, the land shall in fact be used and continue to be used for the approved purposes. Land should not be wasted and, again, enterprise should not be hindered but should be encouraged. In carrying out these objects it should, as part of the present scheme, be made certain that an occasion should not arise for the acquisition over again of the development rights in the same land.

With these considerations in mind it appears that where it is proposed that land should be developed and the development is approved, the Central Planning Authority should acquire the "owner's interest"—compulsorily if need be.

In cases where the land is being acquired for public purposes the question of the method of disposition need not be pursued. But where land is being acquired for purposes of private development the question of the method of disposition does arise. Where the land is required to serve the purposes of a private developer, the Central Planning Authority should lease the land to the developer for an appropriate term of years determined by the nature of the proposed development and subject to covenants and restrictions suggested by the nature of the case and planning considerations. These covenants should include a covenant by the developer to carry out the proposed development. Breach of any covenant or restriction should be enforceable by re-entry as is usual in the case of a lease, the Court having jurisdiction to relieve against forfeiture in the ordinary way.

Upon this the following observations may be made:—

First. It is inconsistent with the permanence of the scheme and the necessity of securing that a proposed development will be carried out, that the land should be disposed of outright to a private developer. Disposition by lease is the only practicable method of securing that the planning machinery embodied in the scheme should be permanent, and that the development immediately under consideration is carried out or the land liable to forfeiture.

Second. If the land is to be developed, it is incon-

ceivable that the two interests—the "owner's interest" and the development rights—should continue separated. As it is necessary for the State to have control, the "owner's interest" should be acquired by the State. This reasoning applies whether the intending developer is some third party or the owner of the "owner's interest."

Third. There must be power of compulsory acquisition of the "owner's interest" in land required both for public development or private development. The State must be in a position to acquire the "owner's interest" and marry it to the development rights. Without that the acquisition of the development rights is no acquisition at all.

Fourth. As a matter of administration where the competing developers are the owner of an "owner's interest" and another party, preference, other things being equal, should be given to the owner.

LOCAL AUTHORITIES AND THE SCHEME

The position which local authorities will have under National Planning has yet to be determined, and the Committee are concerned here with that matter only in so far as it bears upon "undeveloped land" outside a "town area" which a local authority may own at the vesting date or may thereafter acquire or desire to acquire.

Upon this these observations may be made:—

First. The Committee apprehend that any future planning by a local authority, whether it affects "undeveloped land" now owned by it or "undeveloped land" hereafter acquired by it, will be subject to consideration by the Central Planning Authority in light of the general policy of National Planning. It may be that a restriction on the development of "undeveloped land" now owned by the local authority will by reason of national considerations be imposed on that land.

Second. After the scheme is in operation, local authorities wishing to acquire "undeveloped land" will need to secure both the "owner's interest" and the "development rights." The ambit of their powers and the form in which the local authority will hold the land (as fee simple owners or lessees from the State) will need to be considered.

Third. It may happen that a local authority will wish to dispose of "undeveloped land" which it has acquired and the retention of which proves unnecessary for its

purposes. Land so disposed of should not, at any rate after disposal, be excluded from the general category of land the development rights in which are vested in the State.

It appears that until the relation between the Central Planning Authority and local authorities and the ambit of the power of local authorities have been determined, it is impossible to come to a decision on the way in which "undeveloped land" outside "town areas" now held or hereafter acquired by local authorities should be treated for the purposes of the scheme.

DEVELOPED LAND

A description has already been given of an area in Birmingham which had to be dealt with. To that instance the Committee add another. In London alone there are between 6,000 and 10,000 acres requiring re-development by reason of narrow streets and the existence of obsolete buildings. Some idea of the extent to which, war damage apart, there is need for re-development in built-up areas, may be gathered from these two examples. There must be added the need—and opportunity—for reconstruction arising from the existence of war-damaged areas.

Government spokesmen have emphasised that post-war reconstruction should have as one of its aims the transformation of our towns and cities into more worthy centres of living, sufficient to meet the needs of modern civilisation and provide citizens with a healthy environment both for work and leisure.

The Committee therefore assume that they are to envisage plans on bold lines framed according to the dictates of good planning and involving, where necessary, a complete disregard for existing lay-outs.

The comprehensive re-planning of towns and cities will necessarily be a lengthy task and there will in different places be considerable variation in the order in which authorities embark upon the subject matters of planning, *e.g.*, reconstruction of war-damaged areas, clearance of slums, provision of houses for the working classes, redevelopment of areas containing obsolete buildings, provision of improved traffic facilities and open spaces. It is therefore necessary to consider the powers and machinery under two heads:—

First, the measure of interim control required now and

during the immediate post-war period;

Second, the measures necessary on the assumption that it may necessitate large-scale operations to deal with heavily war-damaged areas and the type of obsolete area we have described.

In the Committee's Interim Report they recommended the granting to the Central Planning Authority forthwith of powers of control over building and all other developments throughout the whole country by reference to national planning considerations, and recommended that such powers should continue in operation for a reasonable period after the end of hostilities while the broad lines of reconstruction were being worked out. The Government have recognised the necessity of some such control but have stated that they think that any further safeguards necessary can be provided by strengthening the provisions of the Planning Acts and that they propose to introduce legislation on these lines.

In view of this decision it is unnecessary to do more than to point out that the whole of the country should be covered. Many important areas are not at present covered by planning resolutions, and it appears that the most convenient method of achieving the object in view is to PROVIDE BY LEGISLATION THAT AREAS NOT ALREADY COVERED BY OPERATIVE SCHEMES OR RESOLUTIONS TO PLAN SHOULD BE DEEMED TO BE SUBJECT TO SUCH RESOLUTIONS: AND IT IS RECOMMENDED ACCORDINGLY.

The existing planning legislation is designed mainly for the purpose of guiding or regulating private development over a period of time. The preparation of a planning scheme proceeds in consultation with owners and other interested parties, and numerous opportunities are afforded for objections to be lodged. When the scheme is submitted to the Minister he holds a local enquiry to consider any objections which have not been met and to decide whether to approve, modify or disapprove the scheme. On final approval the scheme is laid before both Houses of Parliament and, subject to any modification arising out of Parliamentary proceedings, becomes operative unless challenged in the High Court.

The procedure provides for advertisement and notification at every stage and consideration of suggestions or objections. The preparation and bringing into operation is necessarily a lengthy task under a system based on negotiation with existing interests, and, although time limits are imposed by Statute for the completion of each stage, the Act enables

the periods to be extended. In practice it usually takes several years for a scheme to reach final form. Moreover, even when the scheme is operative, the planning authority have only limited powers to compel or hasten positive development or redevelopment. A critic might be forgiven for thinking that planning was regarded as a sin or a luxurious pleasure, not a duty.

It is clear that this elaborate and lengthy procedure, and largely negative system, which has been widely criticised in the evidence submitted to the Committee, would be wholly inadequate to deal with large-scale schemes of post-war reconstruction. Methods are required which are simpler, more expeditious and more positive in character.

The conclusion reached is that the simplest and only effective method for achieving the desired results is to confer on the planning authority compulsory powers of purchase, much wider and more simple in operation than under existing legislation, over any land which may be required for planning or other public purposes. The main purpose for which powers of purchase should be conferred is:—

The urgent task of reconstructing war-damaged areas and the almost equally urgent task of securing the re-development of obsolete and unsatisfactory areas. It is essential to invest the planning authority with the power to cut through the tangle of separate ownerships and boundary lines and make the whole of the land in the area immediately available for comprehensive replanning as a single unit. THE COMMITTEE THEREFORE RECOMMEND THAT FOR THE PURPOSE OF SECURING NECESSARY RE-DEVELOPMENT THE PLANNING AUTHORITY SHOULD BE GIVEN THE POWER TO PURCHASE THE WHOLE OF SUCH AREAS.

It has been considered whether, in arranging for development in a Reconstruction Area, dispossessed owners ought to be given preferential treatment in regard to the selection of sites, and the Committee have reached the conclusion that to impose on planning authorities a binding condition such as this might handicap them in their freedom to replan or to exclude non-conforming uses. The matter of meeting dispossessed owners is really one of good administration. THE COMMITTEE ACCORDINGLY RECOMMEND THAT NO LEGAL RIGHT TO PREFERENTIAL TREATMENT SHOULD BE CONFERRED ON DISPOSSESSED OWNERS OF LAND IN A RECONSTRUCTION AREA, BUT THAT, AS A MATTER OF ADMINISTRATION, IN THE

DISPOSING OF LAND REGARD SHOULD BE PAID TO THE CLAIMS OF THE DISPOSSESSED OWNER WHO WISHES TO SECURE A SITE IN THE RECONSTRUCTION AREA.

It may be possible for much of the work of rebuilding in the replanned area to be carried out by private enterprise and land should be made available to developers for approved development in accordance with the plan. In the Committee's view it is essential to secure that the land should not again be divided up among owners of small freeholds. THE COMMITTEE RECOMMEND, THEREFORE, THAT ONCE ANY INTEREST IN LAND HAS PASSED INTO PUBLIC OWNERSHIP IT SHOULD BE DISPOSED OF BY WAY OF LEASE ONLY AND NOT BY WAY OF SALE, AND THAT THE AUTHORITY SHOULD HAVE THE POWER TO IMPOSE SUCH COVENANTS IN THE LEASE AS PLANNING REQUIREMENTS MAKE DESIRABLE, BREACH OF SUCH COVENANTS TO BE ENFORCEABLE BY RE-ENTRY.

Although this recommendation is made primarily in connection with Reconstruction Areas, it is intended to be of general application to any interest in land disposed of by a public authority.

In recommending that these additional powers be conferred on local authorities the Committee's aim is to facilitate the operation of planning and reconstruction by providing a ready means of acquiring the land necessary for the purposes in view. It is true that the existing provisions are inadequate and the procedure complicated, but effective planning has been held up largely for financial reasons. A mere addition to the powers, or an improvement of the procedure, will be futile unless the financial difficulty is faced and dealt with. The objective should be to provide full scope for the preparation of the best plan that can be devised. Planning and the cost of making the land available for planning must be treated, as indeed they are, as separate and distinct questions.

In the case of undeveloped land the recommendations already set out achieve this, but the point still remains open as regards land in towns. Under existing legislation the cost of planning falls on the local authority, although Government grants are available for certain purposes. It lies outside the terms of reference to consider to what extent the cost of post-war reconstruction and modernisation inside towns should fall on local resources or the extent, if any, to which they should be borne by national funds, but clearly the question is one which calls for immediate consideration.

BETTERMENT

In Palgrave's Dictionary of Political Economy the principle of betterment is defined as being "that persons benefitted by public expenditure should contribute to such expenditure to the extent of the increased value of their property, and this not only if the improvement effected by the public authority was carried out for the purpose of conferring a benefit on such property, but also if the resulting benefit was purely accidental, the expenditure having been undertaken for a totally different purpose."

The Royal Commission on the Housing of the Working Classes, in their First Report presented in 1885, in connection with their consideration of the questions of compensation and the incidence of rating, defined the principle of betterment as "the principle that rates should be levied in a higher measure upon the property which derives a distinct and direct advantage from an improvement, instead of upon the community generally, who have only the advantage of the general amelioration in the health of the district."

In 1894 a Select Committee of the House of Lords on Town Improvements (Betterment), appointed "to consider and report whether, in the case of improvements sanctioned by Parliament and effected by the expenditure of public funds, persons, the value of whose property is clearly increased by an improvement, can be equitably required to contribute to the costs of the improvements," stated the principle thus in their Report: "the principle that persons whose property has clearly been increased in market value by an improvement effected by local authorities should specially contribute to the cost of the improvement." But there may be cases where the improvement has been effected without any public expenditure at all. For instance, if the density of building is restricted, more land will be required to house the people. To these cases the principle of betterment would also apply.

To sum up, while the term "betterment" is not specifically defined in any general Act, it may now be taken, *in its technical sense*, to mean any increase in the value of land (including the buildings thereon) arising from central or local government action, whether positive, *e.g.*, by the execution of public works or improvements, or negative, *e.g.*, by the imposition of restrictions on other land.

It may be convenient here to make mention of the different

methods by which, under various Acts, the whole or part of an increase in value of property arising from the action of a public authority is recoverable by the authority. They are:—

(i) *A Direct Charge* on the owner of the property bettered. So far as is known no Act provides for a levy of more than 75 per cent. of the "betterment."

(ii) *Set-off* in respect of the betterment against compensation payable for the acquisition of or injurious affection to other lands of the same owner. The amount recovered is of course limited by the amount of the compensation payable and therefore may or may not extend to the whole of the "betterment."

(iii) *Purchase and Re-sale* by the authority of land adjoining a public improvement—usually a road improvement—and likely to be increased in value by it. This is known as "recoupment," and, if the property does in fact increase in value, the authority is enabled to secure the whole of the increase.

PAST AND PRESENT BETTERMENT LEGISLATION

Two threads in the fabric of the history of this country indicate the application of the principle of betterment:—

(i) Payment ACCORDING TO benefits received or dangers avoided, most frequently represented by sewers and drainage rates; and

(ii) Payment (whether by direct charge or set-off against compensation) IN RESPECT OF benefits received by public improvements, *e.g.*, the widening of roads.

The first thread remains unbroken from the Middle Ages to the present day, when it is represented by differential rates under the Land Drainage Act, 1930. The second thread first appears in 1662, but after a few years is broken and does not reappear until about 1830. Thereafter, although it is somewhat tenuous for long periods, there is no real break and it appears in full strength and colour in the London County Council Improvement Acts of the 1890's and in the Town Planning Acts from 1909 onwards.

The most interesting chapter in the story is the long struggle, from 1890 to 1895, of the newly-constituted London County Council to establish the right to recover by a direct charge the whole or some part of the increase in value of individual properties arising from public street improvements.

The Council promoted Bills for various street improvements in 1890, 1892 and 1893 each of which contained provisions for a betterment charge, but were unable to secure the acceptance of the principle. They introduced a further similar Bill in 1894, and in April of that year the House of Lords appointed a Select Committee on Betterment "to consider and report whether, in the case of improvements sanctioned by Parliament and effected by the expenditure of public funds, persons, the value of whose property is clearly increased by an improvement, can be equitably required to contribute to the costs of the improvement; and, if so, in what cases, and under what conditions Parliament should sanction the levying of such contributions in Local Acts or Provisional Orders." The Committee, after hearing much evidence, reported in July, 1894, that:—

"The principle of betterment, in other words, the principle that persons whose property has clearly been increased in market value by an improvement effected by local authorities should specially contribute to the cost of the improvement, is not in itself unjust, and such persons can equitably be required to do so. But the effect of a public work in raising the value of neighbouring lands is shown by experience to be uncertain. Whether in any particular case, it is possible for a valuer to pronounce that such an effect has been produced by the completion of any public work is a point upon which the evidence of eminent valuers differs greatly."

The Report went on to recommend certain provisions which should be included in any Bill providing for a betterment charge. The 1894 Bill was amended accordingly, but the Council did not proceed with it. It was reintroduced in the following year, and, after some amendments by way of compromise with opponents, it became law as the London County Council (Tower Bridge Southern Approach) Act, 1895.

With the Town Planning Acts, 1909 to 1932, we come to the last and most important stage in the history of the attempts to give practical effect to the principle of betterment. They made a bold departure from precedent by extending the application of the principle of betterment from increases in the value of property arising from the execution of particular public works to increases resulting from the operation of planning schemes; the importance of the extension lies

in the fact that the provisions of planning schemes are largely negative in character, so that for the first time increases in the value of property arising from mere restrictions on development on other lands were brought within the ambit of charge. The Town Planning Acts are also noteworthy in that they were the first general Acts since the reign of Charles II to provide for the recovery of betterment by a direct charge on the persons enjoying the increase in value.

The fairness of the principle of betterment commands general acceptance. It is in its practical application that difficulties arise.

Of the existing methods for recovering "betterment" in its strict sense of increase in the value of land due to particular public improvements or provisions of planning schemes, set-off has been of little practical effect; direct charge under the Town Planning Acts has been a failure; and there is no prospect that either method will be any more successful in future, mainly because their first requisite is one which cannot be satisfied, viz., the identification or segregation of the strict "betterment" element in the total increase in value of any property. The only successful existing method is recoupment which suffers from no such disability, for, where a public authority disposes of land which it has bought, the whole of any increase in value is automatically obtained for the community and the general or particular causes which have created it are irrelevant.

One is forced to the conclusion that no *ad hoc* search for "betterment" in its present strict sense can ever succeed, and that the only way of solving the problem is to cut the Gordian knot by taking for the community some fixed portion of the whole of any increase in site values without any attempt at precise analysis of the causes to which it may be due.

Before setting out the Committee's own proposals, it may be well to lay down certain fundamental principles to which any method for assessing and collecting a levy on increases in land values should conform if it is to be equitable and administratively practicable. They are:—

(i) So far as the increase in value is due to the enterprise and expenditure of owners and developers, it must be excluded from charge—there must be no tax on improvements. This can only be secured by limiting the subject of the levy to increases in the value of the site, and, further, excluding from the increase in site value such part, if any,

as has been created by the owner or developer, though, as a practical matter, this exclusion may have to take the form of an allowance of a fixed proportion of the total increase. Subject to this allowance, all the increase in site value, whether due to specific public improvements or to planning schemes or general community influences, is a proper subject for levy.

(ii) Before any increase in site value can become a proper subject for levy, it must not only have occurred and have been proved, but must also have been realised or enjoyed or be realisable.

(iii) There must be no duplication of the levy. The recovery of "betterment" by direct charge or by set-off against compensation payable on public acquisition of land or for injurious affection, whether under general or local Acts, should accordingly cease to operate.

(iv) The community's share of increases in site values must be secured by one method and by one authority, however the proceeds may be ultimately applied.

RECOMMENDED SCHEME FOR PERIODIC LEVY ON INCREASES IN ANNUAL SITE VALUES

It may be convenient at this stage, for the better understanding of the detailed proposals, to give the main outlines of the scheme recommended by the Committee, and the Committee emphasise at the outset that all the fundamental principles set out in the preceding paragraph have been taken into account in framing it.

It is proposed:—

(i) That, as soon as the necessary legislation is passed, there shall be ascertained the annual site value of every rateable hereditament as actually developed, such value to be a fixed datum line from which to measure all future increases in annual site values. No valuation is to be made in the case of agricultural land and farmhouses.

(ii) That a re-valuation should be made every five years of the annual site value as then developed.

(iii) That there should be a levy in each of the five years following each re-valuation of a fixed proportion (say 75 per cent.) of the amount of any increase in the annual site value over the fixed datum line as revealed by the re-valuation.

(iv) That the levy should be borne by the person actually enjoying or capable of realising the increased value.

(v) That the necessary valuations should be made through the existing valuation machinery for ordinary rating purposes, and entered in the rating valuation lists.

MAIN RECOMMENDATIONS

The Committee recommend:—

(1) THAT IN THE VALUATION LISTS MADE FOR RATING PURPOSES THERE SHOULD BE PROVIDED AN ADDITIONAL COLUMN IN WHICH SHOULD BE ENTERED QUINQUENNIALLY THE ANNUAL SITE VALUE OF EVERY HEREDITAMENT SEPARATELY ASSESSABLE FOR RATES;

(2) THAT THERE SHOULD BE A LEVY IN RESPECT OF THE INCREASE IN ANNUAL SITE VALUE OF EACH HEREDITAMENT AS REVEALED AT EACH QUINQUENNIAL RATING RE-VALUATION OVER THE DATUM ANNUAL SITE VALUE (*i.e.*, THE ANNUAL SITE VALUE AS FIRST DETERMINED FOR THE PURPOSES OF THE SCHEME);

(3) THAT, FOR THE PURPOSES OF THE SCHEME, THE ANNUAL VALUE OF ANY PARTICULAR SITE ON THE OCCASION OF THE DATUM VALUATION SHOULD BE LIMITED TO THE ANNUAL VALUE OF THE SITE AS THEN ACTUALLY AND PHYSICALLY DEVELOPED AND AS IF IT WERE PERMANENTLY RESTRICTED AGAINST ANY OTHER FORM OF DEVELOPMENT THAN THAT EXISTING, AND SIMILARLY ON THE OCCASION OF EACH SUBSEQUENT QUINQUENNIAL RE-VALUATION;

(4) THAT, WHEN THE AMOUNT OF THE INCREASE IN SITE VALUE TO BE CHARGED HAS BEEN ASCERTAINED AT ANY PARTICULAR RE-VALUATION, AN ANNUAL LEVY SHOULD BE MADE IN RESPECT OF THAT AMOUNT FOR EACH OF THE FIVE YEARS OF THE QUINQUENNIUM COMMENCING WITH THE RE-VALUATION YEAR. The levy would always be made "in arrear" of the increment, because it would not become payable until an increase in annual site value had been brought to light by a subsequent re-valuation.

The Committee propose that ONLY A PROPORTION (SAY 75 PER CENT.) OF ANY REVEALED INCREASE IN ANNUAL SITE VALUE SHOULD BE TAKEN BY THE COMMUNITY. Some part of the increase might be due to private skill and initiative, or to the fructification of past expenditure, and if the whole of the increase were taken there would be no economic incentive to private individuals to be enterprising in develop-

ment. Since such part of the increase in site value as may be due to private skill and enterprise cannot be precisely measured, no specific deduction can be allowed against the gross increment, but this factor will be adequately compensated for by limiting the community's share of the increment to 75 per cent.

The Committee also recommend that ALLOWANCES FOR THE VALUE OF OWNER'S EXPENDITURE ON IMPROVEMENTS TO THE SITE (limited to not exceeding 4 per cent. of the capital cost of defined classes of expenditure) SHOULD BE MADE AT THE END OF EACH QUINQUENNIUM UPON THE OCCASION OF THE RE-VALUATIONS. Enquiry will be confined to such expenditure as has been incurred in the five previous years so far as it has affected the value of the site as actually developed. When upon any re-valuation it is found that any subject-matter of the owner's expenditure (for which an allowance was made) has become replaced by renewal in the same or a substituted manner, or has become of no value to the site, the former allowance would cease to form a deduction.

The owner's allowances, being fixed sums determined on each re-valuation by reference to expenditure incurred in each of the previous periods of five years, will be cumulative. Thus, in effect, it is the datum valuation plus the accumulated allowances which forms the amount to be deducted from the periodic annual site values. The operation of owner's allowances and the 25 per cent. of the increase not subjected to levy can be thus illustrated:—

1943—Datum Annual Site Value (A.S.V.) ..	£50
1948—1st Re-valuation:	£
A.S.V.	62
Less datum	50
Gross increase	12
25 per cent. allowance	3
Annual levy payable from 1948 to 1953	9
1953—2nd Re-valuation:	£
A.S.V.	100
Less datum	50
	50

Owner's allowance for expenditure in 1948-1953	22	
		28
25 per cent. allowance	7	
Annual levy payable from 1953 to 1958	21	

1958—3rd Re-valuation:	£	
A.S.V.	140	
Less datum	50	
		90
Owner's allowance for expenditure in 1948-1953	£ 22	
Owner's allowance for expenditure in 1953-1958	20	
		42
		48
25 per cent. allowance	12	
Annual levy payable from 1958 to 1963	36	

1963—4th Re-valuation:		
A.S.V.	100	
Less datum	50	
		50
Owner's former allowance of £22 *re* 1948-1953: ceased to be of value	0	
*Owner's allowance for expenditure in 1953-1958	20	
Owner's allowance for expenditure in 1958-1963	10	
		30
		20
25 per cent. allowance	5	
Annual levy payable from 1963 to 1968	15	

* Owing to a printer's error this deduction did not appear in the calculation as printed in the Report.

Agricultural Land

In England and Wales, agricultural land, including farm buildings (other than the farmhouse itself) is not rateable, and therefore does not appear in the valuation list, but as soon as it is occupied for purposes other than agriculture (*e.g.*, for building development) an entry for the property is made in the valuation list.

It would be impossible—even were it desired—to use the ordinary machinery suggested in order to determine the annual site values of all agricultural land in the country at the date of the initial valuation for the purposes of our scheme, as none of it would be in the valuation lists; to ascertain those values at that date a separate *ad hoc* valuation would be necessary. This would involve an enormous amount of work, much of it useless because most of the land will have no potential building value. Moreover, it is not the Committee's intention to make a levy on betterment or increases in agricultural value. The great expense and delay of an *ad hoc* valuation of the site value of the large area of agricultural land in the country at the date of the initial valuation could not be justified merely to catch, over a small area, the increase occurring, on land still used agriculturally, between the date of the initial valuation and the date of actual development and entry in the rating valuation list.

For the foregoing reasons the Committee propose that no entries for annual site value should be made in the "initial" valuation list in respect of agricultural land and farmhouses and farm buildings, either in England and Wales or in Scotland.

The important question for consideration is how the full increase in the site value of the land on its becoming developed over its agricultural value can be brought into charge.

When agricultural land becomes occupied for purposes other than agriculture an entry is at once made for the property in the rating valuation list without waiting for the next quinquennial re-valuation, and clearly an entry should be made at the same time of its annual site value relevant to the new circumstances to serve as a datum from which to measure future increment for the purposes of the Committee's proposed levy. No levy would be made until the next re-valuation after the development had taken place, but what figure is to be entered as datum annual site value?

On the assumption that the "development rights scheme"

is accepted there will be no difficulty. The State having acquired all development rights in agricultural land, no one will be able to develop agricultural land without obtaining a lease of the land from the State which will be able to secure, by means of the rent charged, the full increase in annual site value of the land over agricultural value which has accrued up to the date of first development. When the property first comes into the valuation list, it would, therefore, be sufficient to enter—at the same time—its annual site value relevant to its new state of development as the datum for measuring any increases in annual site value during the currency of the original State lease, or subsequent leases, or otherwise.

It is only necessary to add, without going into details, that the Committee have been unable to find any satisfactory way of dealing with this matter if the "development rights scheme" is not accepted.

Undeveloped Sites in Urban Areas, and Sites of Demolished or Destroyed Buildings

The annual site value of undeveloped sites in urban areas should be ascertained and entered in the initial valuation list, and similarly on the occasion of each subsequent re-valuation, even though they may still be bare. In accordance with the general basis the Committee have laid down for arriving at annual site value, *i.e.*, by reference to the actual physical state of development of the site, a bare site would be valued on the basis of the prudent use to which it could lawfully be put.

Property which is destroyed or demolished ceases to be a rateable subject, but an entry is, or should be as a matter of law, continued for it in the valuation list so that it shall not be lost sight of, though no rateable value is entered against it in the rate book until a new building is erected. The Committee propose that entries for the annual value of the sites of destroyed or demolished properties should be made in the initial valuation list and subsequent re-valuation lists as in the case of sites which have not yet been developed.

In England and Wales property unoccupied at any quinquennial re-valuation is, or should be, included in the valuation list, though omitted from the rate book; in Scotland it is included in both, since owner's rates are payable even when it is unoccupied. An entry for annual site value should

be made notwithstanding that the property in question may be unoccupied at the date of the initial valuation or any subsequent re-valuation.

INCIDENCE AND COLLECTION OF THE LEVY

The Committee recommend, as the general principle to be followed, THAT, WHEN AN INCREASE IN ANNUAL SITE VALUE IS REVEALED ON ANY RE-VALUATION, THE LEVY THEREON SHOULD BE BORNE BY THE PERSON WHO IS FOR THE TIME BEING IN ENJOYMENT OF THE INCREASE.

Instances of the working of the principle are:—

(i) *Owner-occupiers.*

An owner-occupier of property whose annual site value is shown on a re-valuation to have increased is in a position to realise the increase by sale or letting, and if he prefers to remain in occupation he is nevertheless in enjoyment of the increase and should pay and suffer the levy.

(ii) *Leases* (summarised position).

(*a*) In the case of leases entered into before a date to be specified and still subsisting at the date of the first re-valuation after the initial valuation, the levy will be paid and borne by the "lessee" during the term of the lease;

(*b*) In every other case the levy will be paid by the "lessor" and the burden will rest with him unless the lease is a lease for more than a year and there is in the lease a covenant to the contrary dealing in express terms with the levy.

The "lessee" means the owner for the time being of that lease which carries possession of the property, and "lessor" means the immediate superior in receipt of rent from the "lessee," he being the first person able to realise the increment in the annual site value by increasing the rent.

UNIFICATION OF THE REVERSION TO LAND

A proposal submitted to the Committee for the unification of the reversion to land is as follows:—

That all land in Great Britain be forthwith converted into leasehold interests held by the present proprietors as lessees of the State at a peppercorn rent for such a uniform term of years as may reasonably, without payment of compensation, be regarded as equitable, and subject to such conditions enforceable by re-entry as may from time to time be applicable under planning schemes.

The immediate result of the adoption of the scheme would be that the State as landlord would enforce town planning restrictions in the same way as is common under the long leasehold system in England and Wales. If the covenant is broken, the State should be given a power of re-entry. But that power of re-entry, just as in the case of a private landlord, would be subject to the jurisdiction of the Court to give relief. The practice of the Court in freely giving relief is settled and well known.

This method of securing compliance with town planning restrictions would have the effect of impressing upon landowners that landholding involves duties as well as rights.

The Committee have stated the proposal. It is one upon which the Committee is not agreed.

One member, who thinks that there is much to be said for the ultimate reversion becoming vested in the State in (say) 80 to 99 years' time, objects to the proposal on this ground—that its immediate effect would be to give rise to possible forfeiture if planning requirements and obligations were not complied with, his view being that this would work injustice. Town planning restrictions or obligations might exceed reasonable limits and be so increased as regards positive requirements of capital expenditure on the part of owners as to compel them to submit to forfeiture. The value of a property, whether for mortgage or sale, upon the property becoming liable in certain—or, rather, uncertain—events to forfeiture suffers serious depreciation and loses its stability. Nothing affects value so much as uncertainty; particularly when no estimate of its degree or incidence can be made, as is the case with this proposal, because both degree and incidence would depend upon the restrictions and obligations imposed by dictation from time to time by local authorities and the Legislature.

Another member goes further and objects to the principle of the proposal as involving land nationalisation to which he is opposed.

Other members recognise that the contribution made by the proposal to the immediate solution of the problem is limited and that its ultimate effect is the real matter to be considered. In their view the risks as to forfeiture are met by the Court's powers to give relief or could be sufficiently provided for. For the rest they hold it to be the task of this generation to take stock of the possible needs and views of

succeeding generations with respect to National Planning. They wish to start time running in favour of succeeding generations.

The proposal is put forward for consideration.

THE CENTRAL PLANNING AUTHORITY

In the Committee's view it would be a mistake if there were created a Government Department concerned with National Development, which would rank with existing Government Departments. What is wanted is thought at the centre, informed vision, unified control of land use and co-ordination between the existing Departments.

This can be secured only if there is set up a Minister—the Committee call him the Minister for National Development—who should be specially charged with National Development.* He should have no departmental cares, but he should have the advantage of a highly qualified staff informed as to the economic conditions and needs of the country, competent to put forward proposals for consideration and to advise on the economic and other questions (other than technical questions) arising out of schemes for development.

The broad principles of policy would be settled by the Cabinet after consideration by a Committee of Ministers presided over by the Minister for National Development. The making of schemes necessary to carry out that policy would fall to the Committee of Ministers presided over by the Minister for National Development. Upon those schemes the Committee would have the assistance of the various Government Departments.

The actual execution of the schemes and formulation of detailed plans would fall to the Government Department concerned.

The planning functions of the Minister of Works and Planning under the present legislation appear to fall directly within the sphere of the Minister for National Development. Clearly the control of the "development rights scheme" and the exercise of the powers arising under it also fall within the sphere of the Minister for National Development. In the Committee's view general matters connected with development of land should be kept under the one hand and should

* This proposal has not been accepted by the Government.

be under the personal direction of the Minister for National Development.

The next question is what organisation should, consistently with the principles set out in the previous paragraph, be set up so as to secure that the Minister is not concerned with matters of day-to-day administration, that administration is properly handled and that local authorities, private developers, and landowners have ready access to informed advice and authoritative direction. A suitable organisation would be a Commission on the lines of the War Damage Commission. To the Commission so set up definite powers—including the powers arising under the Town and Country Planning Act and the "development rights scheme" should be given. The control of the Minister for National Development—and, with that, Parliamentary control—should be secured by empowering the Minister to give directions to the Commission.

The Committee would make only two observations upon the composition of the Commission. First, it is necessary that there should be a full-time Chairman and it should include a member of the economic staff of the Minister. Second, it would be an advantage if no other members were full-time members. The opportunity should be seized of securing the service upon the Commission of persons who, by their experience of public affairs, their knowledge of the needs of industry or their knowledge of land utilisation, will ensure common sense administration, and command for the Commission the confidence of the public.

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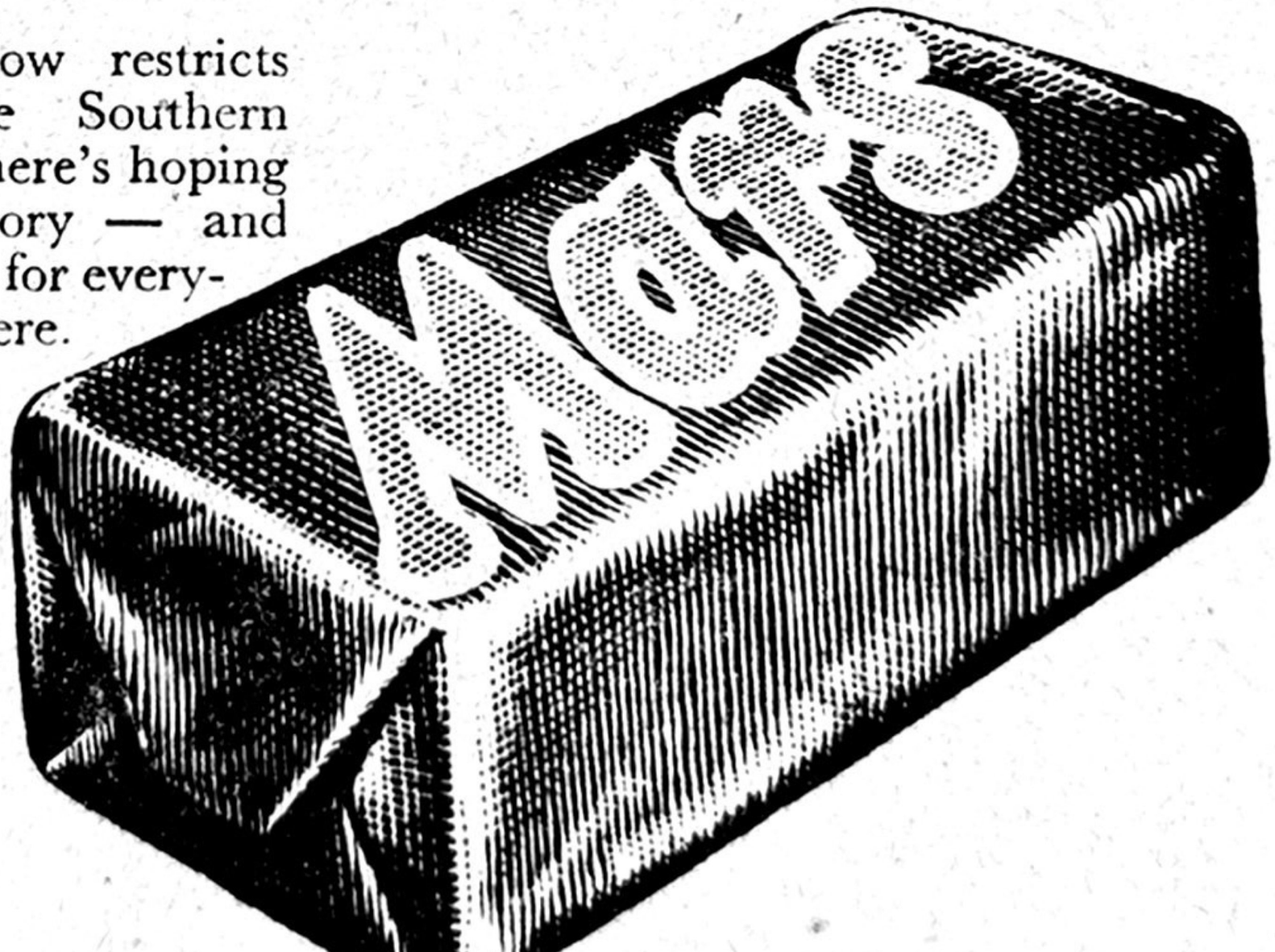

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